

WILLIAM DENNIS.

MEDICINAL PLANTS. By E. M. Holmes, F.L.S.

AUG 21 1916

# COUNTRY LIFE

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# COUNTRY LIFE

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SWAINE.

THE HON. MRS. GUY WESTMACOTT.

106, New Bond Street, W.

# COUNTRY LIFE

THE JOURNAL FOR ALL INTERESTED IN  
COUNTRY LIFE & COUNTRY PURSUITS

OFFICES :—20, TAVISTOCK STREET, COVENT GARDEN, W.C.

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## LABOUR AND RECLAMATION

IT is a sort of pious opinion in this country that whoever wishes to get back to the land is eminently deserving of assistance. Similarly it is held that rustic labour is very ill paid and bread can be got out of a small holding only by a very heavy "sweat of they brow." Hence the support given to the scheme for settling ex-soldiers on the land. On every side the official proposal is recognised privately as mere political window-dressing, but few are bold enough to say so in public, and so a very bad scheme goes through Parliament by weight of moral aspiration rather than conviction.

Its chief demerit is the proposal to take good land out of good hands and give it to those who are only on their trial. Dislocation and dispossession are bad foundation stones for a polity. They would be wholly unnecessary if

reclaimed land were chosen for settlement. Just consider, Captain Charles Bathurst is rummaging Great Britain for 6,000 fertile acres. He cannot possibly find them except in the possession of skilled and successful agriculturists. These must be turned out to make way for beginners, causing an obvious loss to the wealth and the food supply of the nation. But suppose our legislators, looking further ahead, had recognised that modern reclamation can be and is being carried out successfully and profitably in this country as it has been on the Continent, how much easier the task devolving on Captain Bathurst! If he wished land, there are a hundred thousand acres in Norfolk similar to that on which Dr. Edwards is working. Only a very small fraction is being reclaimed by other people. There are a hundred thousand acres in Suffolk, 87,000 acres in Cornwall, almost as much in Dorset. No county is lacking in waste. And we are confining our attention to heatherland and bracken land, leaving out reclamation that depends on such stupendous feats of sea-banking and engineering as Coke of Leicester achieved at Holkham or generations of the Russell family at Thorney. Similar feats remain to be accomplished, but they may best be left to those commanding unlimited capital, such as millionaire owners, limited liability companies, and the Government. The land adapted for our purpose is waste that would be brought into profitable cultivation. And how easily and smoothly could the plan be worked. At the very first it simplifies the question of wages. Reclamation makes a very free use of machinery, and that employed ranges in price from a few pounds to a few hundred pounds. Originally the Dutch heather land was riven up by teams of oxen, then steam-ploughs were substituted, but now the motor-plough has superseded both, and motor-traction prevails over the whole area. It follows that Army men who have been accustomed to drive all sorts of motor vehicles at the back of the front would find work very much to their taste on the reclamation. Very great care is needed in the distribution and handling of chemical manures, and here again skill is required. In fact, the amount of unskilled labour needed falls to a minimum. But to pay skilled men who are to have the management of good and expensive machinery and who are expected to do any slight repairs that may be required, to pay them, let us repeat, on any but a liberal scale would be false economy.

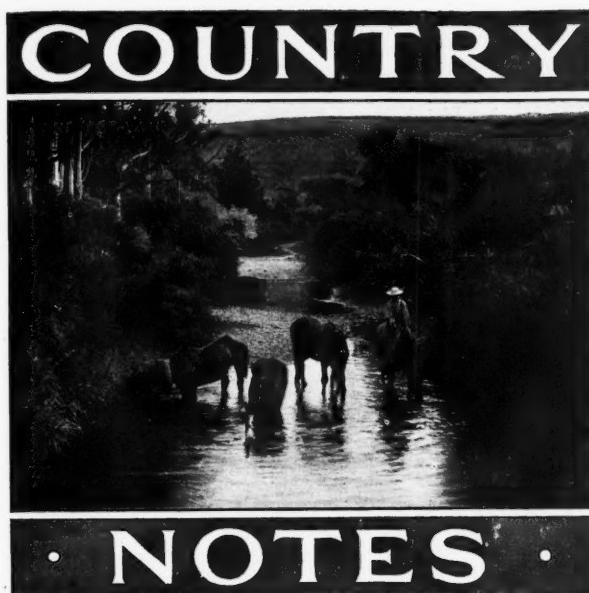
And there would be the further inducement that after the land was brought into cultivation, say in the course of two or, at the outside, three years, the ex-soldiers who had been employed in the work would have the first call on the holdings. The last mentioned would not be classified either as large holdings or small holdings. They would be made so as to make the most economical use of the land. We have seen on a waste an area of forty acres that could easily be turned into asparagus beds. Here is an opportunity for market-gardening on a large scale. There might be five hundred acres in close proximity that would be most advantageously used for mixed husbandry. There might be an area of land immensely suitable for growing fruit near by, and it need not exceed ten acres. In fact, we might go on for ever multiplying the variety of holding possible.

A very important feature of the scheme is that it could be started forthwith. Up and down the country, as we have already said, there is abundance of land well adapted to the purpose, crying, indeed, for speedy reclamation. We have no reason to believe that the owners would make any difficulty about parting with it, and the work could be undertaken either by the Government as it was in Germany, by a Waste Lands Reclamation Society as in Holland, or by the individual owner as in Belgium. All three systems could be worked simultaneously, and it would be of very great interest to notice which came out with the best economical results. For our part, we are of opinion that the incentive to ingenuity, to hard work, to industry, and to frugality would come most freely to the individual owner.

## Our Frontispiece

OUR frontispiece is a portrait of the Hon. Mrs. Guy Westmacott, formerly the Hon. Edith Winn, only daughter of Lord and Lady St. Oswald, whose marriage to Mr. Guy Westmacott, Grenadier Guards, only son of Major-General Sir Richard Westmacott, K.C.B., took place on July 10th.

\*\* It is particularly requested that no permissions to photograph houses, gardens or livestock on behalf of COUNTRY LIFE be granted except when direct application is made from the offices of the paper. When such requests are received, the Editor would esteem the kindness of readers if they would forward the correspondence at once to him.



**T**HREE is much in the letter from Prince Frederick Duleep Singh that is printed in our Correspondence column to-day which in ordinary circumstances would command our fullest sympathy. But he writes as though the war had altered nothing and created no new situation. Surely it must be evident that the increase of our home food supply is a consideration outweighing all others. On the ground taken up by our correspondent, an equally strong protest might be made against the sweeping away of the beautiful Surrey woodlands, of the Scottish forests, and of the many fine plantations in the New Forest, which at this moment are being attacked by the wood cutter. But surely it would be extremely selfish on the part of Great Britain to complain that her fair woods are being cut down while the equally beautiful woodlands of her brave Ally France have been devastated and made desolate by shot and shell. Who is there who would not put up with a defacement of the countryside rather than see the Army deprived of that supply of timber which is absolutely necessary to win the war? Who would set the beauty of a heath, however much he might value it, against the need there is of providing against very high prices and even famine in the immediate future? Whether the war lasts or ends, there must be a very great scarcity of food next year, because the power to cultivate the ground has been restrained so terribly by the exigencies of war.

**A**GAIN, our correspondent writes in a strain that shows he has probably taken very little interest in the recent advance of agricultural science. What happened towards the end of the eighteenth century is no indication of what may happen to-day. On the Continent, when modern reclamation was in its infancy, the idea was very freely expressed that it would be impossible to maintain the fertility of the reclaimed area; but so far from the truth was this, that the land recovered from the heather ranks now among the most productive in Europe. Even if it were true that the sandy Norfolk heath is bound to revert to its original condition, it would still be a gain worth trying for if, in the meantime, it was made to yield its quota of food for humanity. But we can assure our correspondent that he is under a misapprehension on this point. The heath has not become fertile because it is a virgin soil. It has not, like the true virgin soils of America, received for centuries Nature's annual manuring of dead leaves; it has not carried forest, but scanty vegetation, and we may remind him that Arthur Young in the eighteenth century pointed out its neglect as shameful to England and declared that the land was "highly improvable."

**S**ED Miles, *sed pro patria*—the Latin tag, glorified with new meaning by Sir Henry Newbolt, has been crooned as by some invisible prophetess since we heard that Major William de la Touche Congreve in the heyday of his gallant youth had met a soldier's death. No reader can have forgotten those early letters from the front which we were enabled to publish. They were very memorable to those able to contrast their grave manliness, their fine sympathy,

with the gay voice and smile by which "Billy" was best remembered. War brought out a latent strength that only his intimates had divined. "Unsurpassed in bravery" is the phrase used of him by his Divisional Commander. He got his D.S.O. for taking prisoner, practically single-handed, at St. Eloi two officers and seventy-two men, and there, too, he was recommended for the Victoria Cross. Everybody looked forward to a great future for him. And he was beloved by his fellow officers and men. He was married *as* lately as June 1st to the daughter of Mr. Cyril Maude. *Sed Miles, sed pro patria*—yes that is the ultimate consolation, but when so fine a hope has been quenched it will scarcely dull the edge of immediate grief.

**L**ORD ESHER has sent a very fine account of the death of the Duc de Rohan to the *Morning Post*. It occurred on the night of July 13th, when France was preparing to celebrate the great Republican festival of the 14th. The Duc de Rohan was Captain of Chasseurs and also the Deputy for Morbihan. He was shot in a wood on the Somme. Twice before had he been wounded in the war, on both occasions his sole desire being to return to the front as quickly as possible. On the night of his death he had gone out to reconnoitre the German trenches accompanied by his orderly. Members of his company say that when last seen he was sauntering under the trees with a pipe in his mouth, "like a gentleman farmer examining his estate." A few minutes later he was shot dead by the fire of a German machine-gun. At dawn a member of his company with a rope attached to his foot managed to crawl out in No Man's Land between the trenches and to bring back the body which had received no fewer than six bullet wounds, any one of which would have been fatal. The remains of the Duc de Rohan rest in a little churchyard by the Somme, under the enemy's fire, and his eulogy was spoken by a soldier-priest, who eloquently described how seemly it was that a Rohan should march with the young Breton soldiers and sailors and that his heroic blood should mingle with theirs.

#### THE SOLDIER AND THE RABBI.

[A dying soldier saw one whom he took to be one of his own priests administering comfort to one who was struck down. He beckoned earnestly to him to come over to himself, and when he did so he pointed to his breast and begged him to hold the crucifix he had there before him.]

He held it up before the imploring eyes.

With Christ is neither Jew nor Gentile bond nor free.  
Hushed was the cannon's roar, the battles din,  
The Angel of His Presence closed them in.

A bullet sped—and laid the Rabbi low.  
Together on that field of Death they lay.  
To both the dying soldier's crucifix  
Opened the door of Paradise that day.

J. A. OWEN.

**C**HANGES of ministry during the war have been recorded in all the belligerent countries and, indeed, are inevitable, but in this country there are many who will hear with special regret of the resignation of the Russian Minister for Foreign Affairs, M. Sazonoff. Great Britain had no more zealous friend in Russia, and his conduct of affairs, though it may have been mistaken now and then, has succeeded in maintaining the utmost cordiality between the Allies. It will be specially remembered in this country that it was his skilful and sympathetic handling of the Dogger Bank incident that prevented ill-feeling between Russia and Great Britain while the former was at war with Japan. M. Sazonoff visited Paris last year and was equally successful in winning the confidence of our French Allies. He has retired, we are sorry to say, for reasons of ill-health, and it will be recalled that he has had more than one breakdown recently. It is well to remember that the policy he has carried out so successfully has, in reality, been that of the Czar, who has addressed a rescript to him full of appreciation, and it will certainly be continued under the Premier, M. Sturmer, who succeeds him at the Foreign Office.

**A** VERY serious position is arising on the farms—one more likely to cause anxiety to the general public than in the mind of the farmer himself. It is the very gloomy harvest outlook. What with the very late spring, the incessant rain and the low temperature, cereals which ought to be ripening are still as green as they were in the month of June. The farmer has compensations. His stock has done well on the abundant grass, and it is easy to be seen

that he has increased the number of his flocks and herds. His hay has practically been purchased by the Government at what we may call the extremely satisfactory price to him of £6 a ton. Moreover, if the hay is not removed, he is to receive interest; 2½ per cent. if the Government have not taken it in September, 5 per cent. if it remains at Christmas, 7½ per cent. for a month or two afterwards. Thus he is secure, and independent of the wheat crop. But in view of the difficulties of transport a deficiency in the British harvest must spell suffering to the poorer class of consumer during the coming winter. And, unfortunately, the same causes which have operated against the field crops have told against those in the garden, so that unless a very decided improvement takes place in the character of the weather, the difficulties in regard to food are likely to be serious.

**PROFESSOR SOMERVILLE** has been showing by example as well as by precept what can be made of inferior pastures. Five years ago, according to an account which appears in the *Morning Post*, he bought a farm called Poverty Bottom, situated to the east of Newhaven, paying for it £6 5s. an acre. There are 530 acres, and in addition Professor Somerville rents a neighbouring area of 82 acres. It is described as poor hilly land, a great deal of it, with four inches of surface soil resting on chalk. In 1911, 200 tons of basic slag were applied at the rate of from 5cwt. to 7cwt. per acre, and some of the land has been done over again since then. Very little difference was noticed in 1911, but in the following year the basic slag had the usual effect on the clover, which came up vigorously, and the result now is very satisfactory, the improvement being estimated as worth 10s. an acre. Four years ago the land supported forty cattle and 150 ewes; to-day there are on it 115 cattle and 250 ewes. About 80 acres is under tillage and the crops this year are estimated at from 45 bushels to 50 bushels of wheat per acre; whereas they were very thin before Professor Somerville's energetic manuring policy took effect. Here, then, is a very interesting proof of what can be done with poor hill pasture under intelligent management.

**INTELLECTUAL** England has become very much the poorer by Sir William Ramsay's death. He was one of the greatest chemists of our time and, what was even more important, a great teacher. His name will always be associated with the discovery of argon, the name given to a new gas whose presence in the atmosphere was announced at the meeting of the British Association in 1894. In the spring of the following year, acting on a hint from Professor H. Miers, Sir William Ramsay examined an inert gas obtained by Dr. Hillebrand, an American, and discovered that it was not argon, but gave a bright light identical with one observed by Norman Lockyer and Janssen in the spectrum of the sun. Up to then it had not been observed except in the solar atmosphere, and the name of helium had been given to the element to which it was ascribed. As a result of Ramsay's investigations it was proved to occur in the earth and in many minerals.

**POPULARLY**, Ramsay's name is associated with radium experiments, and very interesting is their story. Sir William Ramsay, after matriculating at Glasgow University, where he came under the influence of Lord Kelvin, went to Heidelberg and worked for a term under Bunsen, going subsequently to Tübingen, where he stayed for two years and a half. He came back to England at the age of twenty-one and after a considerable number of years spent as tutorial assistant in chemistry he was appointed Professor of Chemistry at University College, Bristol, in 1880. He retired from the chair in 1913, greatly to the disappointment of those with whom he had come into contact, but he remained active until the time of his comparatively early death, and was occupied, among other things, with steps for the conservation of our coal supply. He deservedly won many honours, and dies famous and regretted.

**IN** the House of Commons on Monday afternoon the criticisms and questions of Mr. Winston Churchill drew from the Minister of War a heartening and reassuring statement. Mr. Lloyd George has too much common sense to be tempted into a review of the military situation in the midst of a more strenuous battle than that of Verdun. To halloo before we are through the wood is utterly against the military and political tradition of Great Britain. Sir Douglas Haig in his despatches has set a fine example of severe moderation, and in a struggle with such a mighty foe as Germany victory must not be claimed till it is

definitely won. But Mr. Lloyd George could and did express the pride we all feel in the young troops composing our amateur, our citizen army. It is a world's marvel that after a few months' training they are able to arrest and turn back the war machine which it has taken two generations to perfect. In the midst of so much fault-finding it is comforting to know that even if increased supplies of munitions are still needed British manufacturers have proved their world supremacy by turning out the best guns in the field in unprecedented quantities. Still better is it to hear on unquestionable authority that the young gunners have in their brief period of training acquired a skill in marksmanship equal to that of those who have given years to acquire the mastery of "those very delicate, subtle and complex machines." Never was "Well done, England!" said to better purpose.

**GERMANY'S** high sounding claims to civilisation and humanity can never receive a sterner rebuke and contradiction than are to be found in the letter from Mr. Gerard. Here is no heated enemy or wild controversialist, but the Ambassador at Berlin of a neutral power, a diplomatist, trained in moderation and restraint, one whose chief business is to refrain, save in urgent necessity, from saying anything to irritate or provoke those to whom he has been accredited. But how can a European Power of Germany's standing expose itself to such charges of inhumanity? Civilised States regret the necessity of interning peaceful civilians on account only of their nationality. They went to Germany as welcome guests. Yet what does the American Ambassador find? Overcrowded barracks, "people of education" herded six together in a horse stall, herded like cattle in hay lofts, deprived of necessities accorded to criminals in gaol for crime. The picture would have been considered horrible if drawn to represent a slum by a sensational journalist, but coming from the impartial and judicial representative of the United States and relating to the detention of innocent civilians, it lays bare a disgrace to humanity. Nor can it be imagined that a people capable of such enormity will stir themselves in response to Sir Edward Grey's courteous though pressing representation.

#### POT-POURRI.

Roses, royally red,  
Deep in the heart of you  
Dwells some intangible  
Innermost part of you,  
  
Which (since I cannot keep  
Fadeless the whole of you)  
I will imprison here—  
The fragrant soul of you;  
  
Here in this china jar  
Guarding the best of you,  
Till I am too, perchance,  
Dust with the rest of you.

JANET READ.

**IN** answer to Madame Duclaux's query about the English riddle that a friend of hers had discovered in an old French manor house in Seine et Oise, letters galore have been sent to us. They are forwarded from many different parts of the country—London, Salisbury (we are taking them quite at random), Rugeley, Beaminster, Worthing, Chester, St. Leonards, Hove, Bolton, Stourport, Minehead, Chippenham, Slinfold, Redhill, Clevedon, Birkdale, Polmont, Birmingham, Ludlow, Lancing, Northiam, St. Ives, Alverstoke, Berkhamsted, Manchester, Bristol, Newark-on-Trent, Retford, Harrogate, and a host of other places. A curious feature of the answers is that they are all right in giving "Nothing." The riddle evidently belongs to the period when Byron proposed his famous one:

'Twas whispered in Heaven, 'Twas muttered in Hell,  
And Echo caught faintly The sounds as they fell.

We may confess that not till the letter was in print did the answer dawn on us.

**SIR HUGH SHAW STEWART**, in the interesting letter which appears in our Correspondence columns, omits the consideration that, in planting, foresters will have to take into account the chance of another war occurring. That is really the reason why we advised planting soft woods. But the true forester will not confine himself to them.

## NOWT BUT BRACKEN AND FUZZ?



A SHOOTING BUTT IN THE BRACKEN.

**P**RINCE FREDERICK DULEEP SINGH raises a question in our Correspondence columns to-day that will have to be faced by the country at large. He protests vigorously against reclamation work being done on a Norfolk heath, chiefly on the ground that it is destructive of natural beauty. Now, we imagine the claim will be undisputed that COUNTRY LIFE, in season and out of season, has, during the whole course of its existence, stood up for the charm of the country and stood against all attempts to violate it. But a new situation of very great difficulty has arisen. Before discussing it, we would like to enter a plea that the substitution of farm crops for weeds is by no means open to the name of desecration. Weeds, after all, bloom but for a day or two in summer and easily surrender to winter's bleakness, while cultivated lands maintain a certain cheerfulness of green even during the most tempestuous part of winter. That, however, is not the main question, but only a side issue at the moment. The point to be decided, put bluntly, is: Can Great Britain

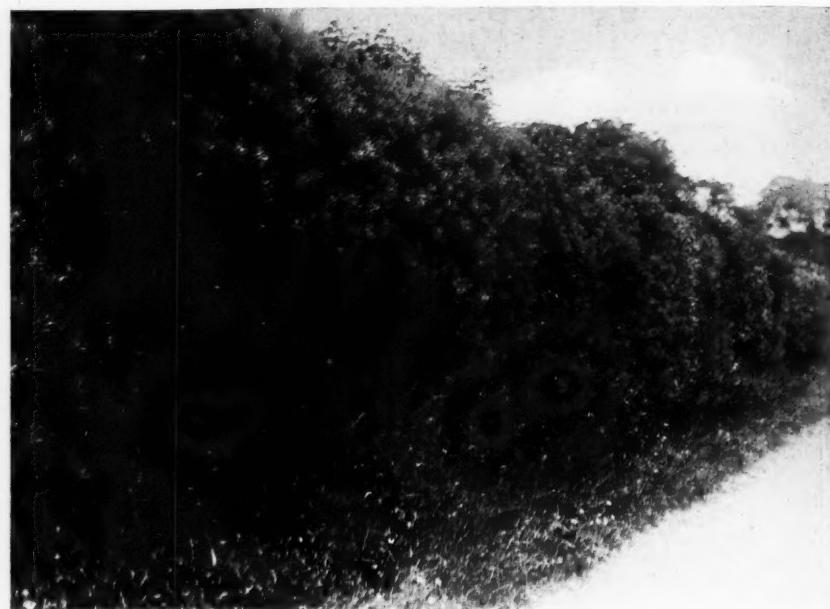
afford at the present moment to let vast areas of land that might be productive of food go to waste? The contention made by our correspondent that the reclamation can only be temporary may be ignored, as those who have given close attention to the subject or have actually done reclamation know that the same skill which brings one crop is able to maintain the fertility of the soil. In regard to the charm of this part of East Anglia, there can be no question. The writer has known it for a great many years, has gone along the straight and beautiful roads on foot and in every variety of vehicle, has roamed the heaths and explored the woods, and can say nothing in too high praise of their loveliness;

but the question is whether England can afford any longer to leave this land out of cultivation. A fortnight ago, in order to explore the country, we in the course of a few hours travelled for some sixty miles of it, starting from Methwold and going by devious courses to the famous lake at Newbuildings, thence to Thetford and back by Elveden to Brandon. The loveliness of the country was past describing. It



THE LOVELY NORFOLK ROAD.

is pre-eminently a land of bracken and many hundreds of acres were green with this plant, which had taken full and undisputed possession. Bugloss and ragwort supplied a variety of colour, and though they did not cover such vast tracts of country as did the bracken, they turned huge spaces into seas of blue and yellow. Even the trees, satisfying to the eye though they are, belong more to the class of things beautiful than things useful. They come in belts or as large spinneys with an acreage for tillage round them. The numerous butts show that they must have been originally laid out for sporting purposes, and the district has long been famous as one of the great shooting centres. Now, against the sport of shooting we have nothing whatever to say. On the contrary, it is a traditional pastime of the English country gentleman and, in its place, a very proper one. But opinions laxly held in time of peace are subjected to new tests when a war breaks out such as the one we are going through. It is already taxing the resources of this country almost to the breaking point, and the end of it is not yet in view. What will happen when that end arrives no one can say exactly, but we do know that it will leave every nation in Europe poor and exhausted. Even if it left riches behind, which it will not, there would still be a great scramble for food, because agriculture has been checked, if not brought to a complete standstill, in each of the countries which have been at war. No one can believe for a moment that the fields of Germany or Austria, Russia or France, have been adequately cultivated. That could not be. First, because those usually engaged on the soil have been away fighting, and, second, because the war has brought with it a great dearth of manures. That which comes from horses has not been obtainable, because most of the animals are at the front, and the difficulties and restrictions of sea transport have curtailed the supply of chemical manures. Germany must have diverted a great portion of her usual supplies to her munition works, especially nitrates, on which her agriculture largely depends. Thus, when peace is declared, there will be something very closely approaching to famine in many parts of Europe. It was by looking forward to this contingency that we arrived at the conclusion, before the war had been in progress for more than a few weeks, that it was the plain duty of Great Britain to bring as much land into cultivation as possible, so as to



A HEDGE OF CLIPPED FIRS.

increase the food supply as much as possible. What confirmed this decision was the knowledge that in nearly every Continental country an addition has been made to the cultivated area by means which science has brought forth. We are not referring to times more distant than the latter part of the nineteenth century and the beginning of the twentieth. It is of no use to refer to the failures that attended many attempts at reclamation during the later years of the eighteenth century and the early part of its successor. Besides, the failures even then are insignificant as compared with the successes. We can judge by the boast that Tennyson puts into the mouth of his "Northern Farmer, Old Style":

Dobbut looök at the wäaste : theer warn't not feäd for a cow ;  
Nowt at all but bracken an' fuzz, an' looök at it now—  
Warn't worth nowt a haäcre, an' now theer's lots o' feäd,  
Foursoor yows upon it an' some on it down i' seeäd.

Nobbut a bit on it's left, an' I meän'd to 'a stubb'd it at fall,  
Done it ta-year I meän'd, an' runn'd plow thruit it an' all,  
If godamoighty an' parson 'ud nobbut let ma aloän,  
Meä, wi' haäte hoonderd haäcre o' Squoire's, an' lond o' my oän.

Do godamoighty knew what a's doing a-taäkin' o' meä ?  
I beänt wönn as saws 'ere a beäan' yonder a peä ;  
An' Squoire 'ull be sa mad an' all—a' dear a' dear !  
And I 'a managed for Squoire coom Michaelmas thutty year.

The waste brought in by so much difficulty by the old farmer alive in Tennyson's youth did not after reclamation return to its original condition, but took its place among the cultivated and profitable land of Great Britain. What was done in Lincolnshire in Napoleonic days and later can be accomplished in Norfolk to-day with much more rapidity and certainty, owing chiefly to the discovery of chemical manures. We do not see how anyone could maintain that it is not the duty of Great Britain to produce food wherever it can be done profitably.

If the cultivation of these heaths for cropping purposes is to be undertaken in earnest, it is probable that an entirely new type of farm will be evolved, or at least a type greatly modified from those now in existence. For example, in order to supply the sandy soil with manure, it



A TYPICAL NORFOLK POOL.

might be well to adopt the system common in the Netherlands of stabling cattle permanently both in summer and in winter, as the supply of manure in winter would not be sufficient for the purpose.

That would involve the latest and best arrangement for the collection and conservation of manure. Thus the outbuildings would be entirely different from those at present in use. But probably even the largely increased



A FOREST OF RAGWORT.



NEAR STOCKE FERRY.



THE RABBITS' DOMAIN.

manure procurable by this means would not suffice for the needs of the crops, and means would have to be taken to supplement farmyard manure with green manure. In doing so the main point would be to avoid the far too common practice of sowing with mustard or a similar crop and ploughing it in and expecting good results. The better way is to employ nitrogenous plants for green manure. That is why lupines are specially recommended for use in reclamation;

but there are many other nitrogenous plants that will serve equally well.

The Belgian practice of sowing serradella in the corn is also worthy of being copied. It is certainly worthy of remark that on sandy farms in the Low Countries there is, practically speaking, none of that dependence upon sheep which is a fundamental principle of farming in East Anglia. But these are only sketchy ideas thrown out to show that the practices in existence do not exhaust the science of husbandry as applied to farming in dry, sandy soil. Variations will be found even in comparatively small areas, and it is perfectly certain that those farmers who have worked for generations on the French soils, the *Landes* of which Arthur Young wrote, if set down to make the best of East Anglian conditions, could improve on local methods.

## CULTIVATING THE CITY WASTES

**A**FINE lead in war-time gardening has been given by the Church Army, whose City Gardens are proving their value more emphatically every year. The scheme, which was started about ten years ago, had its origin, we believe, in a desire to provide work in the winter for unemployed labourers. The Church Army applied for the use of waste building sites, many of which had been lying idle for years, and turned in their unemployed men to clear and level them. The removal of huge masses of concrete, brick and house *débris* of all sorts was no light task, but it saved many a family from the workhouse or starvation. One plot alone in Walworth cost £196 to clear, providing 1,137 days' work at 3s. a day to 372 men.

When cleared the gardens were divided into plots of about one-sixteenth of an acre each, and these were lent to married men living in the neighbourhood who were not earning more than 30s. a week. The great difficulty in the light and well drained soil of practically every site was water, and the only solution was to lay it on, which was done by the Church Army. The rate works out at about 3s. 7d. per plot, and this is the only expense the holders have to meet. So far there has been no difficulty when the plots have been sold for building again. The men have had sufficient notice to clear their crops off and to avoid any further outlay. The total area under cultivation at present is just under seven acres, divided into 109 plots as follows:

Kensington High Street Gardens .. .. .. ..	5 plots.
Hammersmith (two gardens) .. .. .. ..	42 "
Park Village East, N.W. .. .. .. ..	12 "
Stillington Street, Westminster (two gardens) ..	21 "
Elverton Street, Westminster .. .. .. ..	12 "
Arnside Street, Walworth .. .. .. ..	11 "
Loughborough Park Triangle .. .. .. (?) 6 ..	"

Of these the Loughborough Park site has only just been taken over, while the Walworth site has been temporarily appropriated by the War Office. Hammersmith, which is a comparatively recent acquisition, is the only one which was not derelict building land, and consequently was cleared at much less expense than the others. Judging from the Westminster plots which we have seen, it would be difficult to find less attractive or more hopeless places for gardens. True, they all have good road frontages, but this is practically the only advantage. Mainly situated in the poorest and most densely populated neighbourhoods, where the atmosphere on a hot summer day or a foggy winter one is that of London at its worst, the majority of them are enclosed by buildings on the other three sides. In the case of Stillington Street No. 2 garden, these buildings are high factories and schools, so that some plots get only early morning or late evening sun, while others are not only baked and shadeless in normal years, but also suffer from the refracted heat of the brick walls by which they are bounded.

Yet a tour of inspection last Saturday afternoon, when Lady Bagot awarded certificates of merit to the best plots, showed how the men surmounted even these difficulties. The first prize for Stillington Street and the Championship were awarded for a plot in the particularly forbidding site just described. As a rule the men do not keep account of the outlay on, or returns from, their plots; but the prize winner in this case has sold vegetables to the value of £4 10s.

this season, besides supplying everything for his own family. Last year he sold 50lb. of potatoes, 200 head of celery, 100 cauliflowers, 2cwt. of parsnips, 1cwt. of carrots, as well as onions, leeks, runner beans, cabbage, beet and broccoli. Though this year has not been a good one, every inch of ground is well occupied, and not only with vegetables; room has been found for a bed of fine scarlet carnations and a border filled with roses, stocks, dahlias, mignonette and other flowers; while in a tiny greenhouse built and heated by the holder himself are some very healthy cucumbers. This man has no dwarf beans or lettuces, and in none of the plots did we see any peas. In each case when we asked the reason of this, the answer was the same—sparrows. "They are our worst enemy," said one man solemnly, and one can well believe it. The birds are specially partial to cos lettuce, or else the cabbage variety is better able to withstand their onslaughts. The history of dwarf beans in these patches was that they were nipped at the outset by frost, and the new shoots thrown up later in the season were nipped by the sparrows.



A WESTMINSTER GARDEN.

The Elverton Street site was appropriated three years ago by the International Association of Road Congresses, and after it had been covered with specimen paving and tons of machinery for a long period its case might well have been thought hopeless. Added to this, the soil is particularly friable. One could push a stick nearly two feet into the light powdery stuff without resistance; yet every plot was full and flourishing. Dwarf beans here left nothing to be desired, and the first prize winner had several rows of healthy potatoes (King Edward and Up-to-Date), though as a rule potatoes are not a good crop.

Plants will not stand the winter in these poor London gardens. The befouled atmosphere kills everything but root; and, excepting the men who have built themselves frames, the holders buy their seedlings. The word "co-operation" made them bristle, yet conversation showed that they practised it unwittingly.

"We don't want no co-operation," said this prize winner; "when the chaps want cabbage or leeks or

anything else they comes to me, and I writes to a gentleman for a couple of thousand or whatever it may be and we gets 'em cheap and I shares 'em round."

"Artificials" was another tabooed word. Road droppings are bought and stacked until ripe and then shared out again. "None o' that chemical muck for us till the last horse is dead," said another man. But the winner of the championship seceded from this doctrine this year and invested in sixpennyworth of nitrate of which half has been used.



A GOOD OPEN PLOT AT PARK VILLAGE EAST.



IN THE HAMMERSMITH GARDEN.

There seems to be a fashion in vegetables. Thus all the plots on one site had a row or two of red cabbage; in another beets and beans were most popular; in another ordinary cabbages and cauliflowers. One man, a gourmet evidently, has a good bed of asparagus, strawberries, splendid cabbage lettuces, rhubarb and—maize, which, unfortunately, has succumbed to the wet season; while nearly everyone has flowers. They carry their instinctive fellowship further, for in every instance where a holder has gone to the war his companions are either cultivating his plot for him or

helping his wife and children to do so. One man has erected a large tool shed for the common weal, and they lend tools or help each other in a way that is really fine, when one remembers that the gardens are only cultivated in their limited spare time.

Some idea of the high standard attained by these back street gardeners may be gained from the fact that they have won the Banksian silver and bronze medals and the Knightian silver and bronze medals of the Royal Horticultural Society. But far more important than these triumphs is the amount of fresh wholesome food they place at the disposal of people

to whom even indifferent vegetables would otherwise be an unattainable luxury. The initial expense, which is comparatively heavy, is borne by the Church Army, and if subscriptions were forthcoming they would gladly extend their labours indefinitely. Public bodies are not so handicapped for lack of funds, but so far only one, the Hammersmith Borough Council, has followed the splendid lead given them. Yet in city gardens, run on more or less similar lines, lies, we believe, a practical solution of a great part of the question of how to feed our poorer classes in times like the present.

## MODERN FORCES IN AGRICULTURE

### II.—WILLIAM DENNIS

**T**HE name of William Dennis is inseparably associated with the development of potato growing, and the story of his life forms a most instructive chapter in the history of agriculture. It carries the reader through many vicissitudes in the history of that industry; for, indeed, it contains no more changeable period. Mr. Dennis was born in the "hungry forties"—in 1841, to be precise—and his "victorious middle-age" coincided with the darkest time for English husbandry, the long depression following the great gust of prosperity in the seventies. Now, the fight well over, he enjoys a serene, but not inactive, old age.

The great feature of his career is that during a period when agriculture had fallen to the lowest depth of depression, when farmers were quitting their holdings in despair and landed proprietors had to let their country seats because they could not meet the expense of keeping them up, he was able to succeed most brilliantly in the apparently ruined profession of husbandry. And he did not do so by doubtful and speculative methods, but soberly and quietly, by intelligence, industry, good judgment and application. He did not sacrifice to the goddess of chance or luck, but depended on the surer foundation of work and thought. Moreover, his success reacted on the prosperity of the country. It meant, among other things, a substantial addition to the national food supply.

William Dennis is one of the few whose careers have been epitomised by the great Lincolnshire poet, who also in his day was the mouthpiece of England, Alfred Tennyson:

Whose life in low estate began  
And on a simple village green;

Who breaks his birth's invidious bar,  
And grasps the skirts of happy chance,  
And breasts the blows of circumstance,  
And grapples with his evil star.

Every good thing comes from the land, and students of heraldry know well that the more vigorous English families derive ultimately from a yeoman origin. Such were the early progenitors of Mr. Dennis, but he himself had to start from a very low rung of the social ladder. His father was an agricultural labourer, and what that meant in the first half of the last century there is many a biography to show, such as the story of Robert Stephenson, whose iron roads and steam locomotives were already during the childhood of Dennis superseding the mail-coach and the pack horse, who at six earned sixpence a week by scaring birds; and that of William Cobbett, sent to lead the plough horses at nine. National education did not become a realised fact till Dennis had attained manhood, and at his birthplace, the village of Horsington in the Lincolnshire Fens, there was no school. If there had been, money was very scarce in the cottage homes of those days, and it is doubtful if his parents could have afforded to send him. But there is an education he did not miss. It is called "Mother wit," and comes from Nature and work and experience.

Agriculture was very backward in the fifties and sixties. It flowed on sluggishly as it had done for centuries. Manual labour was everything, and the age of machinery had not dawned. To go about at Kirton in a luxurious motor and to note the scientific equipment of the estate on which every new device is utilised as soon as its value is proved makes it hard to realise that one's wise old companion knew by personal experience what the ancient drudgery meant. For he has passed through not only a critical era in the history of agriculture, but all the stages of agricultural life, and loves

to dwell on his early days when corn was sown by hand, cut with the hook or sickle, and threshed with the flail—"the weary flingin' tree," as Burns called it. But to him all this is bathed in what Carlyle called "the soft moonlight of memory." He looks back with pleasure, without the bitterness of feeling that he belonged to

. . . an ill-used race of men that cleave the soil,  
Sow the seed, and reap the harvest with enduring toil.

The horizon lifted and disclosed a new world when at the age of twenty-two he left the neighbourhood of Horsington and settled at Kirton, where he still lives. For he established a link, scarce visible to him at the time, between Covent Garden and Lincolnshire, commerce and agriculture. Not that he sat down deliberately to do so. He merely "grasped the skirts of happy chance." In plainer language, he became foreman to the local representative of a Covent Garden potato firm. One of his duties was to superintend the packing of the potatoes, and this awakened an interest in the tuber which became the mainspring of his career. He went on working steadily at his job till 1875, when his employer, being old and infirm, retired, and William Dennis stepped into his place and became the sole Lincolnshire representative of the Covent Garden firm.

But now another aspect of his career must be touched on. His thrifty parents had instilled into his boyish mind the virtue of never spending all he received, and even when his wages were at the smallest he managed to have a little over. The armchair economist can never explain how it was done, but the fact is indisputable that in the worst of times a farm labourer here and there was able to lay by money. Follow the history of a rich farmer of to-day back for a generation or two and the chances are you will discover a progenitor for him at the plough-tail. Young Dennis had a joy in saving, and says he was prouder of the first sovereign he carried to the savings bank at Louth than he is of his bank balance of to-day. Very early in manhood he had enough to enable him and another to become purchasers of seven acres of land, and land was worth money in the sixties. The price was £68 an acre or £686 in all. Of course, it is not implied that two agricultural labourers had been able with all their thrift and industry to amass this considerable sum. In those times "Mr. Greenfields" was reckoned to be the best security, and lawyers were accommodating; yet the ownership of this first land rested on a frail foundation that in most cases would have given way entirely under the stress of the first experience. William Dennis would not have been the man he is if unable to "breast the blows of circumstance." The new owners planted their ground with potatoes; a bad season followed, the potatoes went rotten, and they lost everything. But misfortune, which overwhelms the weakling, only stimulates the strong. The partner was discouraged and wished nothing better than to get rid of his share, whereupon Dennis acquired that too. That he could do so proves that he had acquired an asset worth more than gold, viz., the credit which comes as the reward of perseverance and integrity.

Thus in the early seventies he was sole proprietor of the seven acres. From the time he began working for himself he was attracted by the possibilities of potato growing, and its cultivation became at once his hobby and his business. In the day of small beginnings he could grow only on what to-day must be regarded as a very small scale, but it very soon became known that he brought very special skill to bear on the cultivation of the varieties then in vogue, such as Myatt's Prolific, Patterson's Victoria,

Scotch Regent, and so on. Whatever he made out of his potato dealing he laid aside for enlarging the area of his land, continually attending sales and buying it in small quantities until the eighties. Then a change for the worse came over agriculture. These were the days when new wheatlands were being opened up in the United States, in India and in the Colonies, and at the same time there was a very marked development in steam oceanic transport, so that it became possible for foreign countries and dependencies to send their surplus wheat into this country and sell it at extraordinarily low prices. Mr. Dennis was not at all affected by the panic which seized upon most of the wheat growers. He saw that if cereal crops were not remunerative, the better course was to look out for something that was, and he stuck to his potatoes. When the worst effects of the depression began to be felt and whole farms came tumbling into the market, he acquired a considerable extent of land. The neighbouring farmers did not perhaps grasp the possibilities of the crop. At any rate, they did not begin growing it on a large scale. It was later on that those who saw nothing but ruin in growing wheat turned their attention to the potato, and the war has made us all see that England would be in a much better position to-day in regard to her food supply if in all the districts where potato growing is possible the farmers had done as William Dennis did. However, he continued to acquire land at prices ranging from £35 to £40 per acre. When he was beginning and owned only a plot of soil, he practically confined his efforts to the potato; but now that he was working on a large scale his activities branched out into the other forms of agriculture, giving particular attention to the local breed of cattle, the famous Lincolnshire Reds, and also to the Lincoln Long Wool sheep. Still potatoes formed his main standby, and by studying the particular varieties that were suited to the soils on which he had to work he became an unrivalled master of his special art and was able to produce much heavier crops than were generally obtained.

The next stage in his career occurred in 1885, when the Covent Garden firm for whom he was acting, as well as growing for himself, retired. Here was a new opening for his unbounded energy. Mr. Dennis then launched into the business of a merchant on his own account. He established a place in London for the sale of potatoes in or about 1886-7, and he began to control very considerable quantities of merchandise. To that he brought a power of organisation ripened by experience, and the colossal system of distribution associated with his name was instituted. The problem of production had been solved, but in those days the organisation of distribution was, practically speaking, a new idea. From that time onward the property he acquired grew quickly. Whenever a farm came into the market he was a potential buyer and, when he now owns a considerable estate, from 2,000 to 2,500 acres are allotted to potatoes every year, which means probably about one-fourth of the land. His success appears in large measure due to the fact that he trusted to his own intelligence far more than to that legendary lore which ever has been a faith in husbandry. And he has always been one of the most progressive of agriculturists. It is well enough to look back into the simple past, but it was a time of arduous, ill paid labour and hard living. Mr. Dennis has come as a boon and a blessing to inventors, for he is ever ready to encourage them by trying the newest, provided he is convinced of its practical efficiency. When land came into his possession he did very much like Mr. Hope in the Lothians, of whom it was said that he was one of the first to farm right up to the fence. In growing potatoes the primary requisite is a good tilth, and a good tilth is impossible without adequate drainage, therefore this was one of the things he was accustomed to take in hand first. Next he cut and tidied the sprawling hedges and joined together the subdivided fields, which were so small as not to permit of the use of large machinery. He also effected great economy in haulage. The estate has about twenty miles of light railways on it, which wonderfully facilitates the work of the farm. Not only can the potatoes be brought much more easily and at less cost from the fields, but mud and bad weather are no obstacle to traffic on the light railway. It makes the fields accessible at every time of the year—a great boon in low-lying flat land like that of the Fens.

Another great improvement which was not heard of in his youth is the telephone. A private system has been installed on the estate, so that all foremen on the farms can have intercommunication and can also receive their orders direct from the head office. The estate work is

nearly all done at home. There is a great carpentry department for the making of carts, fences, and so on; there is another branch of it for the maintenance of houses; there is a blacksmith's establishment for the shoeing of horses, repairing agricultural implements, and doing work of that kind.

But perhaps the most interesting of all the features on the estate is formed by the great chitting houses which are placed in the close neighbourhood of the fields. Mr. Dennis holds very strong views about the value of sprouting seed potatoes. The ordinary way of allowing the tubers to form long white sprouts in the darkness of a barn he does not consider good enough. His own method is to lay the potatoes in layers in shallow boxes mounted one above the other, hundreds of tons being stored in this way in a single house. They are given a long time to form sprouts, remaining with only the necessary protection from excessive frost from November to planting time, being turned and changed at regular intervals, of course. The ideal potato, when the time comes for putting it into the ground, has formed a strong green sprout which is supported by all the nourishment stored in the root. Very often the white slender shoots of potatoes which are kept in the ordinary way break off when the root is put into the ground. The result is that the growth makes a new and exhausting demand on the nourishment stored in the root and a much less vigorous plant is produced. The great glass-roofed, glass-sided chitting house is a prominent feature on each of the Dennis farms. The estate might have served as a model from which Mr. A. D. Hall drew the inferences set down in his book. It is owned by the Dennis Estates Company and farmed by W. Dennis and Sons. Were it cut into small holdings and farmed by little people, it is impossible to believe that it would be any more productive than it is to-day, and certainly it would not support anything like an equal number of people.

And this brings us to the personal side of the character of Mr. Dennis, which we have avoided so far because to do anything else would not have been consistent with the innate modesty which belongs to him. He has always on taking a new farm been at great pains to see that the houses of the agricultural labourers are made as comfortable as can be and is in the habit of paying the best wages for the best men. In his own conduct he is particularly gentle and the least aggressive of men, ever thinking of the welfare of his neighbours as much as of his own and actuated by a love of his country. He has filled many positions of trust and all of them faithfully and well.

There is no need to emphasise the interest attached to a career like that of Mr. Dennis, but its constructiveness is just as noticeable, especially at the present moment, when the calling in which he is engaged has once more regained its position of supreme importance.

Many of the most prominent names in the political and business world are borne by men who began at the lowest rung of the ladder; but chiefly in manufactures, where conditions have been favourable, and few in agriculture, where conditions are unfavourable. Perhaps most prominently successful in agriculture, indeed, no less successful than the commercial magnate, is "W. D."—the pioneer farmer on industrial lines.

To sum up, the following are the points in a successful career:

The capacity of every machine was carefully studied and it was set to produce the crop it was most and best adapted for.

Profits and capital expenditure to produce most economic output have been generously expended.

Production has been systematically organised, and then organisation for distribution to home and foreign markets systematised with equal efficiency.

"William Dennis and Sons," are a family engaged in world-wide operations in addition to the ownership and farming of some 8,000 acres of land, thus realising the ideal of industrial agriculture on a great scale which is only now beginning to be preached.

Such is the tale of "W. D.," whose parents came from an old stock of Lincolnshire yeomen and a survivor of an old knightly family; the pioneer of industrial potato growing in South Lincolnshire; now seventy-five and still active and keen on all points connected with farming, in addition to the multifarious duties devolving on a county magistrate and membership of all the various local authorities; gentle and generous, modest and self-retiring, an enthusiastic Englishman and an ardent Imperialist, a Nonconformist, but a strong Unionist.

## "THE TWITTERING SWALLOW"

**O**F all the birds with which we are familiar in this country none perhaps is more popular than the swallow. It has domesticated itself in the dwellings of mankind for so many ages that it has become part and parcel of the life of the homestead. We have a welcome for all the migrants, for there is a savour of adventure in the thought of those tiny atoms winging their way steadily across perilous seas and still more perilous continents that appeals to our island-born love of wide adventure. We feel that somehow, wherever they may winter, their return hither to breed must be something in the nature of a homecoming. But the greeting we give to the swallow is a thing apart, and the morning when we first see that slither of steely blue dart arrow-like under the low lintel of cow-house or tool-shed marks for us the real beginning of spring. We know the swallow has come to stay, for unless mishap befall it will rear a second brood on the dark beam just under the tiles where it has made its home; and all summer long we shall hear its happy twittering about the house, the incessant murmured "twee-twee" of the fledglings, and shall have the material satisfaction of knowing that, in addition to its exquisite grace of form and its incomparable flight, the bird is rendering us no slight service in the destruction of injurious insects.

If there can be a drawback to the swallow it is that it is impossible to tame it; a bird that feeds almost entirely on the wing is not to be lured to the window-ledge; but, after all, to study its habits and movements one scarcely needs it nearer than such a site as our pictures depict, out on an open beam in shed or barn. Usually, however, it selects a darker corner where sharp eyes are needed to see what is going on, and the photographer in this case has been very fortunate.

A few years ago there was a marked diminution in the number of swallows—not only did fewer arrive in the spring, but a succession of cold, wet summers played havoc with the young birds, many second broods dying in the nest. This year, however, they show a marked increase once more, but appear to be more locally distributed. For example, they used to be comparatively common in the outlying suburbs of London; now



"THE SPARROW HATH FOUND A HOUSE AND THE SWALLOW A NEST FOR HERSELF."



CLINGING WITH OUTSPREAD WINGS.



A. Taylor.

APPETITE INCREASES WITH AGE.

Copyright

they are exceptional visitors. In one district in Essex this spring there is scarcely a pair, while in another in Surrey the inhabitants say they have never had so many.

It is rather extraordinary, considering the amount that has been written on the subject, that there are still people who confuse the swallow with the house martin. The swallow is easily distinguished from the martin by its steel blue upper parts and its long, slender tail feathers, which are quite different from the martin's forked tail, while in the latter bird the under parts are pure white and in the former they are tinged with buff, a sort of echo of its chestnut forehead and throat. Again, the swallow is a larger bird, measuring from beak to tip 8½ in. (though a good deal of this is tail), while the extreme length of the house martin is only a little over 5 in.

Their nesting habits, too, are totally different. The martin places its deep cup of mud against a wall or often a cliff face; the swallow, although it can build a hanging nest, prefers a support, and as a rule selects a beam or the space between the top of a wall and the edge of the roof. Its nest ordinarily is cup shaped, and the mud of which the outside is composed is not pure as in the martin's nest, but bound with grass, scraps of straw, and so on. Inside both are lined with grass and feathers.

We have heard of swallows roofing their nests, though we have never seen an instance. If this is true it would

appear that the swallow is a much more adaptable bird than the martin.

In singing the praises of the swallow, however, we do not wish in any way to belittle the martin, a familiar friend of long ago. The martins' infinite capacity for taking pains as they daubed untiringly at their little home against the bedroom window remains one of the most vivid recollections of childhood, and the feeble murmur of their nestlings in short summer nights was the first bird music we knew. But the martin has always ranked second to the swallow. See how badly poets have treated him. Excepting Tennyson's "Roof haunting martins warm their eggs" in "The Sleeping Princess," no other reference comes to mind at the moment. But since Virgil wrote "the twittering swallow nests beneath the beams" two thousand years or so ago, the swallow has figured in poems innumerable, though curiously enough it has been hymned rather in sadness than in joy. Tennyson, Browning, Mary Coleridge, Meredith, to quote a few of the best known, all associate it with longing or sorrow, and none more sad than Swinburne with his lamentation for Itylus, or that verse of a shorter poem:

Had I wist, Oh spring, said the swallow,  
That hope was a sunlit mist  
And the faint light heart of it hollow,  
Thy woods had not heard me sing,  
Thy winds had not known my wing;  
It had faltered ere thine did, spring  
Had I wist.

M.

## BATS AS PETS

BY L. DOUGLAS.

**M**Y attention was first drawn towards bats by discovering one in my bedroom, clinging to the casement curtain. I seized my tennis racquet meaning to switch the unwelcome visitor out of the open window, but as I watched the little creature I felt I could not treat it with any harshness. So I put the racquet away and took the bat in my hands and was surprised to find what an intelligent little face it possessed.

At last, rather reluctantly, I watched it fly away with that peculiar darting, curving flight which we usually associate with a butterfly and which appears so aimless.

After this I determined to try to tame some of these small animals, and my first experiment was with one of the long-eared variety, which, to my mind, is the prettiest of the species to be found in this country. I know that "pretty" will seem a wrong term



Miss F. Pitt.

A GROUP OF NOCTULE BATS.

Copyright.

to use in connection with bats, but few people have any idea of their beauty unless they have seen a live one at close quarters. A stuffed specimen is, at its best, a very poor thing to judge by. I obtained much entertainment from merely watching the quaint little face of my captive. He was very easily tamed and his ways were often both playful and amusing.

As I had no idea how many flies a bat ought to have, and not being an adept at catching these insects, I tried my long-eared pet with raw beef which I cut into very small pieces to suit his tiny mouth. He was an exceedingly greedy little soul and ate them with avidity. He was likewise decidedly particular, and if the meat were not freshly cut but had got slightly hardened by being exposed to the

air, he would have none of it. He always hid his head with his wings while eating, and during this process his movements, judging by the back of his neck, appeared to be similar to those of a cat while consuming food.

Timothy, as I named him, taught me that bats are not the dirty little animals which I had imagined them to be before capturing him. His toilet was an elaborate and lengthy affair. Using his claw as a comb he took the greatest pains to dress his fur, while satisfaction was never wholly attained until he had been successful in obtaining a perfect parting down the middle of his back. This was achieved by drawing his claw from head to tail.

To watch Timothy trying to walk was a ludicrous sight; he propelled himself along by little side-long plunges, but he managed to cover the ground in a remarkably short space of time. His long ears made him very attractive, for they were constantly changing and going into curves, sometimes framing his wee face in a grotesque manner as he moved about.

He was much more interesting than his successor, who simply hung to the top of his cage and would not look at either raw meat or flies. I was forced to let him go in case he died of starvation, but I have since thought there must have been something wrong with him, as I have never heard of a similar case.

One bat would only eat flies and would not be tempted by meat; he always discarded the wings, head and legs, which seems the custom of all these little animals. They can readily be taught to take flies from the lips of the person who tames them, but this is an accomplishment I have never yearned to teach them; not from any dislike to a

bat becoming so intimate, but to my intense objection to holding insects in that position. But it is an easy matter to teach them to take flies from the hand.

I have always allowed my bats to regain their freedom after keeping them just long enough to note their habits and to learn a little more each time of their ways. I always fear that when boxed in a cage they are not able to eat sufficient food to form the necessary fat which keeps them alive through their long winter sleep. For this reason I have never tried to retain one through the cold weather. I am constantly hoping that one of my little captives knowing me again may fly to me some evening, but so far this has never happened.

The long-eared bats are not very sociable to other species, but are very friendly towards those of their own kind, and it is diverting to watch them aid each other in cleansing their fur. They all have similar habits, but some seem more original than others, and one learns to appreciate their small elf-like faces and to have quite an affection for them.

Their fearlessness is an undoubted charm, and forms a strong asset when wishing to tame them. Most wild inhabitants of our country require considerable patience before their natural timidity is conquered, but with bats comparatively little is necessary.

If one wishes to tame them it is best to find out their resting place, where they hang suspended during the day, and it is then no trouble to detach the claws of one and place it in a cage. If caught in the evening—a much more difficult matter—they will probably retaliate by biting



LONG-EARED BAT ASLEEP.  
With ears tucked out of sight.

fiercely, but, even so, their mouths and teeth are far too tiny to inflict an injury on anyone. But the little animals themselves are very often hurt unintentionally by their captors, as they naturally offer resistance as dusk approaches and they are at their liveliest, their wings and noses, not to mention the ears of the long-eared species, being extremely sensitive. If they cannot be discovered during their daytime sleep, a window left open with a candle burning inside the room will probably achieve the desired result, if the house is one to which bats fly near. When one of them enters close the window and leave the little prisoner until the morning, when he will be found clinging by his claws



IN THE ACT OF TAKING FLIGHT.

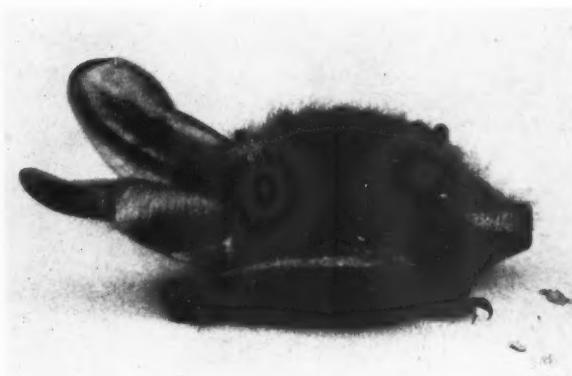
to some object in the room with his wings mantle-wise folded round him; he can then be placed in his cage.

This second method has its drawbacks, for occasionally four or five of these little creatures will fly towards the lighted room, and I have had eight in all at once before there was time to close the window. In the latter case, I stood the candle on the window-sill outside the window and managed to get rid of them in that fashion.

June is the breeding month of the long-eared species. It is an interesting sight to see a baby bat clinging by its claws to its mother's breast while she searches for food in the air. It hangs head downwards and appears perfectly content in that position. When the parent bat is resting she folds a wing round her offspring. It is quite possible

if one discovers a bat with young to feed the mother on milk from a flat spoon without her showing the slightest fear, not attempting to bite. Both she and her young can then be studied at close quarters.

The cry of the bat possesses a peculiar ventriloquial quality, for one is never sure from which direction it comes,



LONG-EARED BAT AWAKE, WITH EARS SPREAD OUT.

but it seems to descend from any place on which the gaze happens to be fixed when listening for it.

For so long now bats have been left out in the cold as being absolutely too weird and fearsome to be thought about, and they have very seldom aroused interest except in a very small minority of nature lovers. After all, they perform a good work in the scheme of Creation, and when insect devourers of the bird world go to sleep, the bats awake and continue their task.

They are playful, happy little creatures, and as I watch them busy with their hunt in mid-air and then see them skimming over the water I wonder why swallows and butterflies are regarded with so much kindness and consideration, while these marvellous little creatures are looked upon with horror and repulsion.



Miss F. Pitt. ANOTHER LONG-EARED BAT (LIFE SIZE). Copyright.



**M**OST of the many stately houses east of the Severn have been built with the silvery or the pale yellow varieties of Cotswold freestone, which gives almost a gay tenderness to their ancient beauty; but Berkeley, crowning its old red sandstone rock and sentinelled by a few gigantic old pines that rise from the watery park lying below it, will have nothing of that, and frowning in its own solemn, massive shade of purple and grey looks as if it had been built against the very clouds and the genii of the storm. The winds and the thunders and the sunbeams alternating for eight centuries seem to have been its natural playthings. The scars of time and the rents of decay have been stopped with grasses and wild flowers, or they are gloriously mantled with felonious and over-abundant ivy. It is thus clothed about with its own darkness and light, and seems to be set there for ever as the sternest token of feudal days, dating even from before the dawn of our liberties.

That some sort of fortress occupied the site in the Confessor's day seems certain by the fact that Earl Godwin, the owner of its great manor of 55,000 acres, and the Lady Gytha resided there, and that after the destruction by her stormy lord of the nuns' convent on the estate (probably at Oldminster, near Sharpness) she absolutely refused to live at Berkeley, or even to eat a fowl or its eggs that

came thence. In consequence of this her lord purchased Woodchester for her from its owner, one Azor.

The fact is that the mound upon which the great irregular cylindrical keep of Berkeley now stands is not (as has constantly been reasserted from the days of Mr. G. T. Clark onwards down to the last antiquarian picnic there) an artificial mound thrown up (as so often has been the case with Norman castles), but a solid, hard rock, that was doubtless originally palisaded. In Norman days, however, it was cut and trimmed sufficiently to create a round platform of 100ft. by 110ft., which was afterwards encased in the lofty sub-tending wall, with, at intervals, four half-round turrets having the usual flat buttresses. The keep thus formed does not date from before 1154 or the earliest years of Robert Fitzhardinge, to whom Henry II transferred this great possession of Roger III de Berkeley, giving him express permission to build his stronghold as he pleased. The precious Charter, with seals, containing this licence is on view in the Castle to-day. The extant proof of the date of the keep is to be noticed in the decorated Norman jamb of its chief upper entrance (Fig. 6).

But let us leave this for the present. The wide western curve of the keep is seen as soon as we have passed the ditch (over a permanent seventeenth century bridge) and the outer gate (not the original one) into the first bailey,



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1.—KEEP AND INNER GATE.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

July 29th, 1916.]



"COUNTRY LIFE."

2.—THE CASTLE FROM THE BATTLEMENTS.

[July 29th, 1916.]

or ward. A low castellated parapet wall follows along on our right, dropping deeply to a bright terrace garden (Fig. 7) and an ancient bowling green (Fig. 4) (where doubtless many of the sixteen Sovereigns who have visited or resided at Berkeley in olden days have proved their skill, besides Elizabeth and Essex), and gives us a magnificent view

over the low-lying home park and the flooded waters of the Avon, now alive with hundreds of seagulls. Across it from the great kennels comes the not unhappy wild yelping of the Fitzhardinge hounds. That water of old gave additional protection to the stronghold. In front of us, then, stands the inner gate, again not the original one, but formed in the sixteenth century out of a Norman rectangular tower of a later building constructed against and enclosing the first half-round bastion or turret of the keep. This brings us to the irregular triangle of the great court or inner bailey. On our left the latter is therefore flanked by the blank, dull 62ft.

Copyright.

## 3.—KEEP AND CONSTABLE'S FORE-BUILDING.

"COUNTRY LIFE."



high walls of the keep and its adjoining fore-building, and on the other sides by the Castle curtain, containing within its outer Norman wall the chief domestic apartments, joined on to the great hall in our direct front, by the chapel at the angle, and so on round to the buttery, circular kitchen, vaulted (so-called) bakehouse, etc., leading to the bachelors' quarters, and finally returning sharp due west back to the keep and its Norman fore-building.

Looking down from the battlements of this fore-building (near G on plan) the walls (much rebuilt in the fourteenth century) have received Tudor and later doors and windows so as to give more cheerfulness to the greater and lesser drawing-rooms, the opposite, or southern, walls of which are parts of the ancient curtain-wall overhanging the home park. Therein, among other features of interest, hang three very fine eighteenth century tapestries made for the family and bearing the well known gules and chevron argent between



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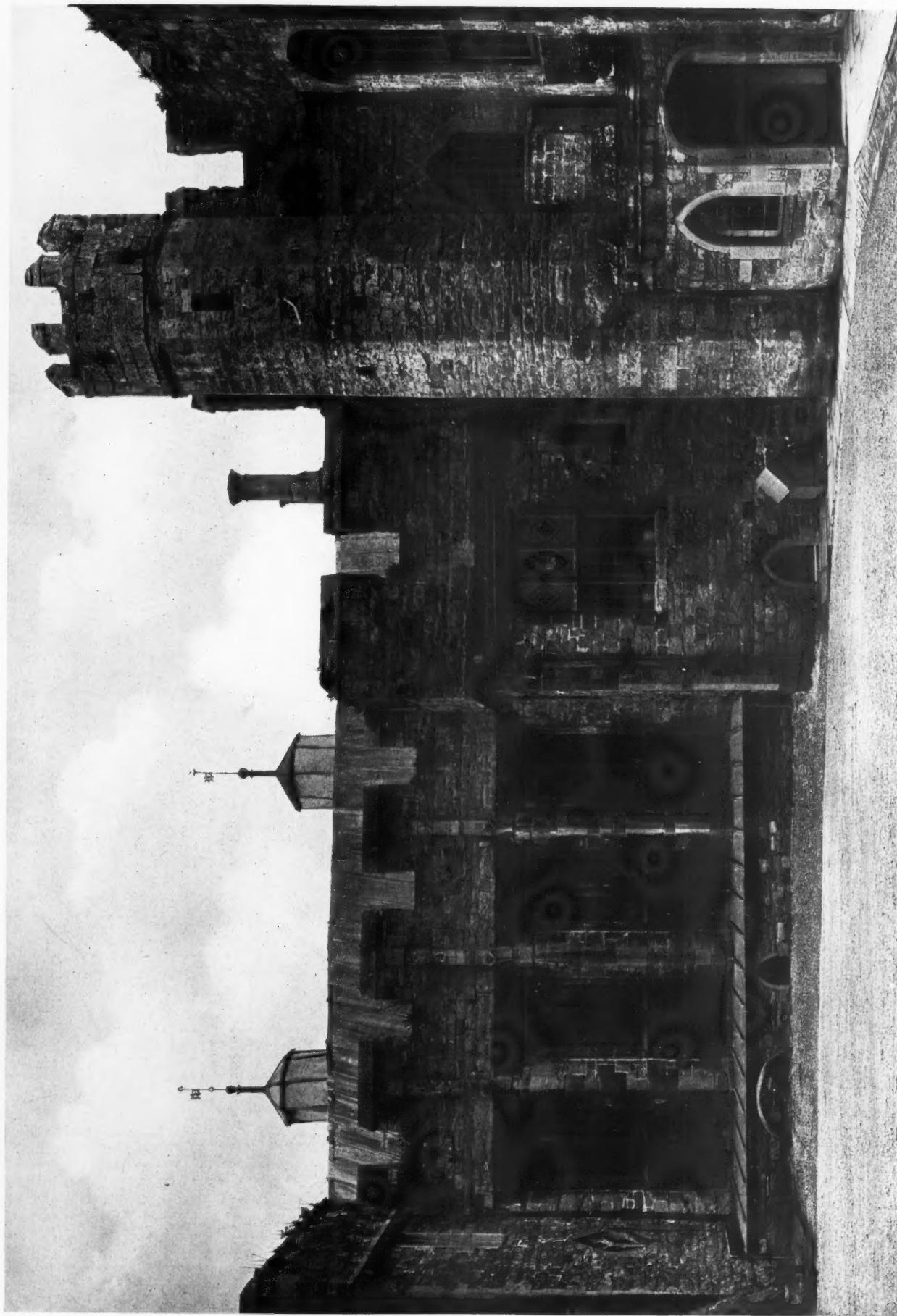
## 4.—BOWLING GREEN AND ANCIENT YEWS.

"COUNTRY LIFE."

July 29th, 1916.]

COUNTRY LIFE.

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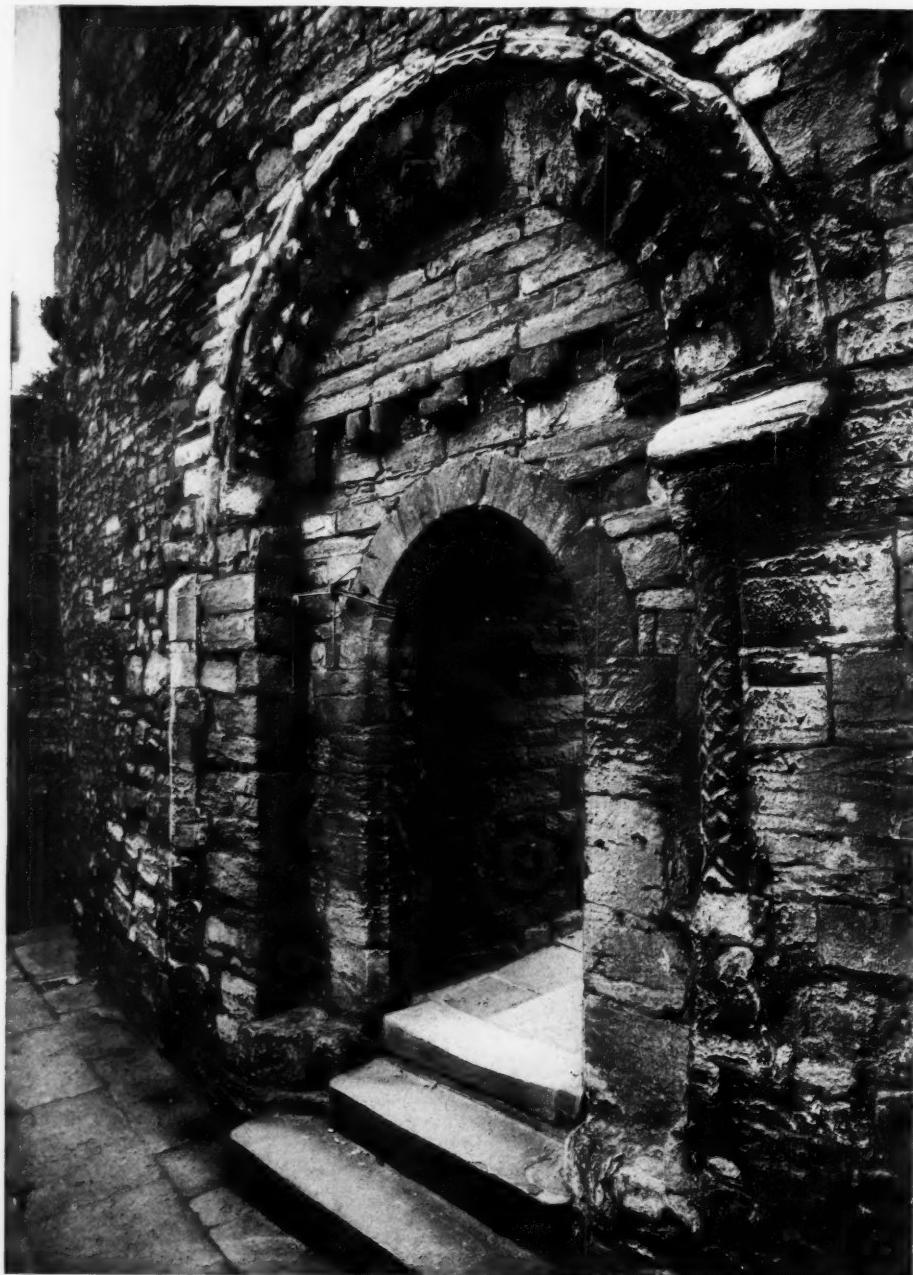
5.—HALL AND STAIR TURRET.

Copyright.  
"COUNTRY LIFE."

[July 29th, 1916.]

nine crosses (*i.e.*, *crusily*). The quarters of the world are represented, but the fourth one has long been mysteriously missing. For the student of tapestry the bedrooms at Berkeley afford unusual interest, the example in the great State bedroom representing the three Kings being the most notable specimen. But somehow these old and awkward rooms never lose a certain original grimness by day, and they can only be thoroughly appreciated when filled with lights and the cheerful converse of fair ladies; and we also recall that the roofs, grey towers and severe battlements similarly can put on marvellous beauty under the silvery fires of a risen full moon.

We find ourselves beside the entrance of the historic fore-building which leads up to the chamber above the door,



6.—NORMAN DOOR OF KEEP WITH FOURTEENTH

CENTURY INSERTION.

long associated in the public mind with the final tragedy of Edward II, and beyond that leading by a passage immediately to the upper keep. While passing in two circumstances must be noted. The hood of the Norman door still remains over the fourteenth century inserted door, and, secondly, the building is not bonded in to the keep, and is therefore a second and later Norman addition to it (*c.* 1170). It was probably the Constable's residence.

A few salient facts must suffice here to guide the visitor to sane conclusions regarding the popular horror first purveyed by an obscure Thomas De la More (probably of Bitton, Gloucestershire). Of him we only know that Camden declares him to have been contemporary with the

events, and his realistic account certainly was copied seventy years later by Walsingham. The half-imbecile King was brought to the Castle in April, 1327, and remained there in charge of Thomas Lord Berkeley, of his brother-in-law, John Lord Maltravers, and of Sir Thomas de Gournay and William de Ocle. He died (it was alleged by most foul murder) at their hands on September 21st after five months' detention, but Lord Berkeley declared, to the new King's satisfaction, on his trial in Court in 1331 that at the date in question he himself, at any rate, was absent on a sick-bed at Bradley at some distance from the Castle.

Maltravers and Gournay and their retainer de Ocle (presently, but not forthwith) fled to France, attainted, and rewards were offered for their capture by a not unnaturally vengeful young Sovereign.

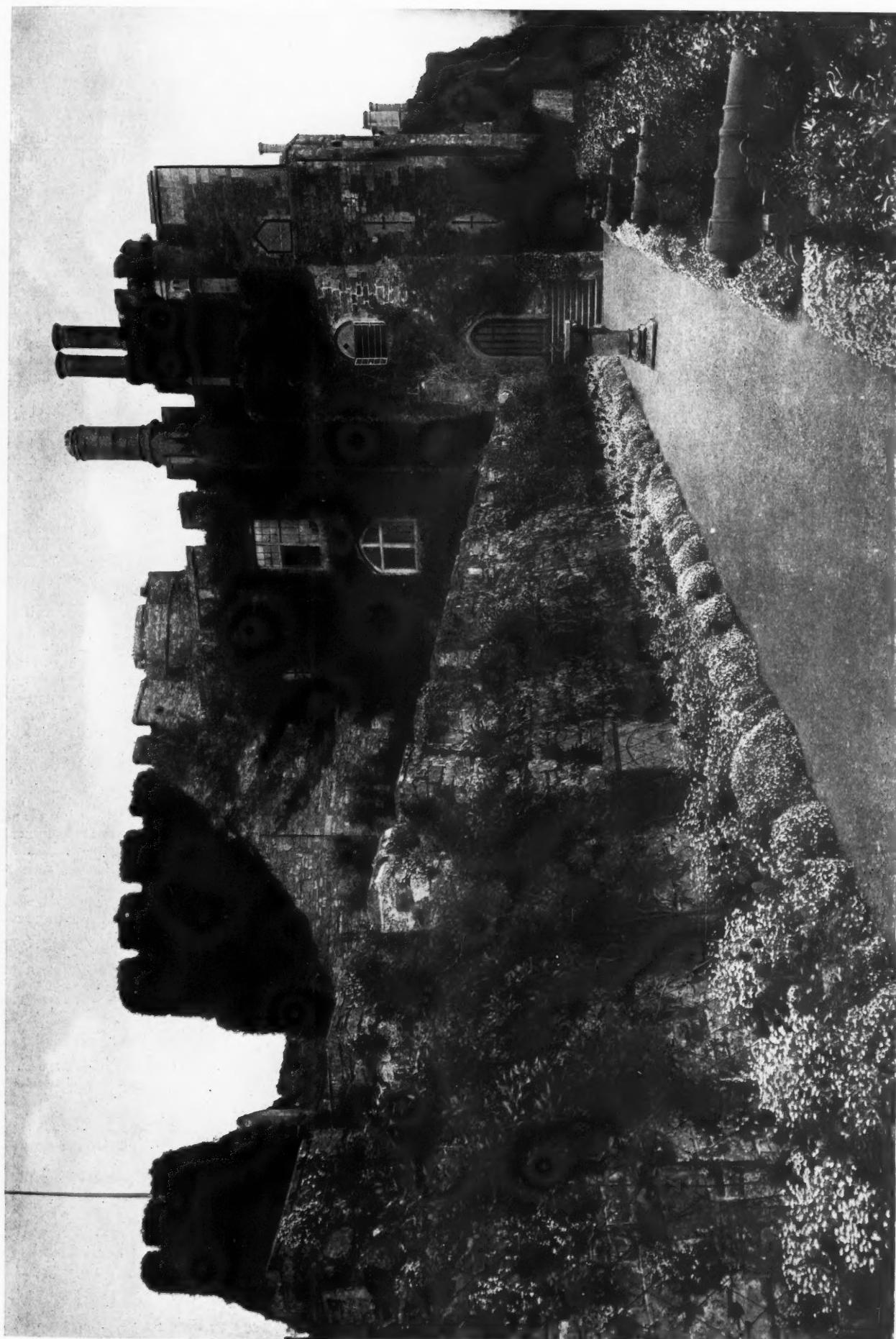
What, then, are we to think of the following remarkable facts which ensued? After remaining abroad for twenty years, Maltravers was personally restored to this King's favour and to his own confiscated manors in Gloucestershire, and he died there in December, 1353, a free and honoured man. As to Gournay, although he was captured and very suspiciously murdered by hirelings on board ship on his way from Marseilles, his lands were all restored to his heirs by the stern son of his alleged victim. The King's body, moreover, remained three months at Berkeley after his death, having been duly embalmed. The heart was first placed by Lord Berkeley in a silver vase and most probably had been already willed, in case of death (as was the then universal custom with princes), to the Benedictines either of Westminster or of Gloucester, a then much favoured Royal castle and city. Lord Berkeley received £5 per diem for expenses while the King's body thus remained with him at Berkeley; and it was probably while there that the cast for the beautiful, realistic effigy, now in Gloucester Cathedral, showing the most perfect of known Plantagenet portraits extant (without any trace of emaciation or contraction), was made by some first-rate master taken there for the express purpose. There was also paid "in oblations at severa times in the chapel of the Castle for the King's soul, xxi<sup>d</sup>. In expenses of the Lord Berkeley's family going with the King's body from Berkeley into Gloucester, xviii<sup>s</sup> ix<sup>d</sup>."

This passage thither (as is well known) was arranged between Abbot Thokey and the Lord of Berkeley, in the former's "chariot honourably adorned with the Armes of the said (Abbey) church and by the whole convent, solemnly attired, and with a procession of the whole city honourably received in the north part of the Church there, next to the great Altar buried." The picturesque account of the murder by De la More, our only early authority, may be critically weighed by his statement that the murderers threw over this miserable worn-out debauchee "large and heavy feather-beds more than fifteen strong men could carry." Yet in spite of this "the shrieks of an agonised King" were heard (it was related) all over the town of Berkeley, "so that many being awakened from their sleep (as they

"COUNTRY LIFE."

7.—TERRACE GARDEN NEAR THE ENTRANCE.

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themselves confirmed) prayed heartily to God to receive his soul," etc.

The original chapel of the Castle (St. John) is in the turret to the right of the decorated Norman doorway (Q on plan) which leads to the grassy platform of the keep, and is now the muniment-room, with a well below it. The turret to the left, enclosed by the domestic apartments and rising beside the fore-building (in Fig. 3) contains the chief dungeon, some 40ft. deep, into which a lantern is usually let down from the floor. We have evidences of the releases of prisoners from the Berkeley dungeons. Opposite, across the grass, stands the great Thorpe Tower (H on plan), rebuilt by the same Lord Berkeley in 1346. It takes its name from the family of Thorpe, who by its custody held the neighbouring very picturesque manor-house of Wanswell. The great west wall of the keep was partly rebuilt after its breaching by Colonel Rainsborough during the siege in September, 1645, when were made the bullet marks still to be seen on the west door of the neighbouring church. (Fig. 8.) No doubt, in the words of his fellow-Warwickshire poet, in Shakespeare's own day, and but a little previously to this,

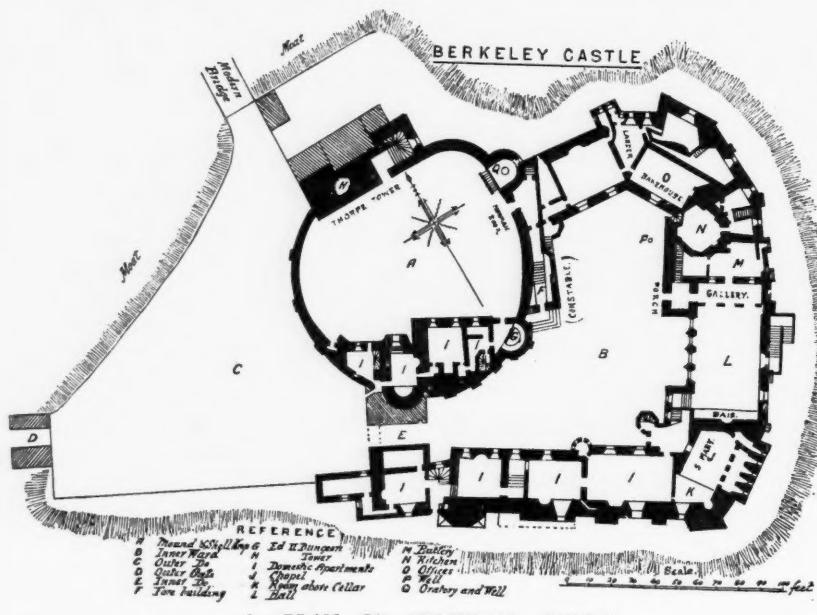
Berkeley's towers appear(d) in martial pride  
Menacing all around the champaign wide  
Right famous as the seat of barons bold  
And valiant earls whose great exploits are told.

Its gallant royalist defender was the ill-fated Sir Charles Lucas, who vigorously held it for nine days, just two years after his King, so full of ill-advised assuredness, had slept here and dreamed of a forthcoming reduction of Gloucester, and then had left it garrisoned by Colonel Veale, while he fared *via* Tetbury to Cirencester. In the Civil Wars of Charles, as in those of remote King Stephen—situated as it is on the Roman highway between Gloucester and Bristol—Berkeley had seriously to be reckoned with. Cromwell restored it to George, Lord Berkeley, whose eldest son, Charles, was perhaps godson to the late King.

Originally, it is probable that an interior fosse surrounded the keep and was filled up when the fore-building was decided upon; further, the former chief entrance to the keep was the Thorpe Tower, where the great circle of its walls flattens out so as to be parallel with the one short and straight section of the ancient moat.



Copyright 8.—THE PARISH CHURCH AND ITS BELL TOWER. "C.L."



9.—PLAN OF PRINCIPAL FLOOR.

man of Cornwall," became famous as a great translator, hater of Minor Friars, and author of a "Description of Britain," now lost.

ST. CLAIR BADDELEY.

#### ROOKS IN THE TEMPLE

"Absent since the '30's, rooks have lately returned to Fountain Court."—*Daily Press*.

Caw—Caw—Caw—  
The rooks are here again;  
Black as night, they wing their flight  
Through the sunlit rain.  
Years fourscore have glided by  
Since swayed their lodging 'gainst the sky;  
But why they went, and where they went—  
To question is in vain.

Caw—Caw—Caw—  
The lure of lake and land  
Endues the note that grips the throat  
Where runs the teeming Strand.  
With visioned eyes once more I see  
A boat beneath a trysting tree,  
Moon daisies white in swathes of light,  
—Young lovers, hand in hand.

FAITH HEARN.

As to the above-mentioned older chapel (or muniment-room), it is interesting to find Pope Urban V at Avignon granting forty days of pardon and release of the penance enjoined to everyone who should in these Castle chapels pray for the souls of Lord Maurice de Berkeley and the Lady Elizabeth (Dispenser) his wife, "and for the soule of Lord Thomas his father, being in purgatory." The Chapel of the Virgin near the great hall, that still in daily use, has been constructed over a Norman triangular sub-vault carried on its original columns and caps. The southern wall of this is 13ft. thick, with three embrasures overlooking the park. This portion is reached from the great court by the door beside the octagonal turret in Fig. 5. The chapel will be shown and described in next week's article.

At least one of the chaplains here, John of Trevisa (1322–1412), "Gentle-

# IN THE GARDEN

## CULTIVATION OF MEDICINAL PLANTS AND THE COLLECTION OF HERBS IN GREAT BRITAIN.

By E. M. HOLMES, F.L.S.

**A**WAVE of enthusiasm has recently swept over the British Isles, chiefly affecting ladies who are amateur gardeners, and who imagine that in the cultivation of medicinal plants there is a new field of activity whereby one of the trades that has been filched from the British by the wonderful organisation and indefatigable industry of the German people may, by combined effort, be restored to Great Britain. Some of these ladies are ready even to sink capital in order to effect so desirable an end; others, whose lot in life is more humble and whose means are small, have hoped that they might at one and the same time help to restore the trade to this country, and perhaps make some small addition to their incomes.

A number of centres of would-be herb growers and collectors have been formed throughout the country, but as soon as they attempted to set to work, all sorts of difficulties cropped up.

men of all persuasions, whether orthodox allopaths or heterodox homœopaths, or eclectics, etc. The principal of these are belladonna, henbane, foxglove, colchicum, stramonium, hemlock and aconite. The first four are very widely used, the last three less so.

Belladonna, henbane and foxglove, hemlock and colchicum, are natives of this country; stramonium and aconite may be regarded, where they occur wild, as escapes from cultivation. There need be no scarcity of belladonna and digitalis in this country. Their scarcity in commerce is due to the fact that they grow wild chiefly in the woods of private estates where game is preserved, and the owners have hitherto neglected to cultivate and supply the market with these plants.

Of foxglove, the leaves only, collected when the plant is in flower, are used in the dried state. The plants are easily cultivated in gardens where the soil is rich, but silicious or sandy and there is partial shade. Belladonna will grow well on chalky or calcareous soil, under the shade of deciduous trees, where the soil is not too dry, and is covered in winter with fallen leaves; but partial shade is necessary to success. The root is used



FOXGLOVES AT PAINSHILL.

Very few of the officers of these centres could answer the questions proposed to them by would-be growers, inasmuch as not only were many of the herbs usually sold by herbalists unknown to them, but even more important and largely used official medicinal plants, such as belladonna. Indeed, one chemist who asked for specimens of belladonna or deadly nightshade found that out of 300 specimens sent to him for identification, only two belonged to that plant. The best method of cultivation, the proper time for collection, the most approved methods of drying herbs, roots, leaves, flowers and seeds, and how to dispose of them when collected and dried, were questions that required immediate and satisfactory answers, which in many cases were not forthcoming, even from the Board of Agriculture.

Upon these points the Editor of COUNTRY LIFE has asked me to give a few practical notes. In the limited space placed at my disposal, I can do little more than refer to papers I have already published for details concerning cultivation and collection, since these would take up too much space; but I may explain the actual state of the trade and show what is required in order to retain the trade in this country after the war is over.

### MEDICINAL PLANTS.

Under this heading are included the few plants which are official in the British Pharmacopœia, and are used by medical

as well as the dried leaves, and the whole of the fresh herb is also used supplied in June, and the dried leaves in the autumn. The root also is dug up and dried in autumn when the foliage dies down.

Henbane is a much more difficult plant to cultivate. It does not require shade, and is only particular in having a rich, loose, porous soil containing plenty of humus, *i.e.*, decayed vegetable matter, and a fair amount of moisture beneath the surface. It is a biennial plant. The autumn leaves of the first year, which are all root-leaves, are gathered in September, and dried and sold as the annual leaves of the biennial plant. The second year the plant flowers and dies. The upper leaves of the flowering plant are pulled off and dried when the plant is in full flower, but the whole herb is also sold fresh early in June, as soon as flowering begins. By "herb" is here meant all parts of the plant except the root, which in this plant, as in foxglove, is a waste product, though there is no reason why it should be so, since it might serve for the cheap extraction of the alkaloids it contains.

Colchicum is a local plant, abundant where it occurs, but easily cultivated in gardens, especially on a heavy soil. It may be pointed out here that there have been imported into this country, chiefly from Germany and Austria, large quantities of these medicinal plants, but mostly of inferior quality, and so

cheap in price that no grower in this country could produce a good article of proper medicinal strength at the price. This importation of inferior Continental drugs ought to be stopped by a protective tariff, which should prevent competition with good quality herbs grown or collected in this country.

Owners of large estates could greatly help in increasing the production of the more important medicinal plants by permitting their gardeners to supervise the spreading of the plants in the woods where they already grow wild, and by restricting their collection and sale to authorised persons, while utilising their gamekeepers to protect the plants from marauding tramps, who would otherwise readily dig up the belladonna roots for sale.

Private individuals can easily grow foxglove and henbane, colchicum and stramonium, but belladonna is not desirable in gardens on account of its juicy, blackish berries about the size of small cherries being attractive to, but dangerous for, children. But those who attempt to grow henbane must understand that it is quite as speculative a crop as hops, and must be prepared to lose over it one year what they may gain in another. For details of the cultivation of these important medicinal plants, the reader is referred to the lecture delivered at Caxton Hall on June 20th, and now published by the author at 1s.

#### MEDICINAL HERBS.

There is quite a considerable trade carried on in the Midland and Northern manufacturing counties, especially where the workmen are subjected to intense heat, as in the Potteries, iron manufactory, etc., where a quantity of liquid

is required to make up for loss of fluid from the blood by perspiration. For this purpose a kind of herb beer is extensively employed which acts as a slight tonic, but does not intoxicate.

The use of herbs as medicines among the poor is also very considerable. Although the great majority of these herbs are natives of this country, they have hitherto been imported from the Continent at a



**ATROPA BELLADONNA.**  
(*Deadly Nightshade.*)

cheap rate, especially, but not exclusively, from Germany and Austria, but at so low a price that it has been impossible to have them collected by ordinary farm labourers in this country to compete with them. How to collect and dry them at the same price is the problem that is now set before the herb growers' associations. To solve this problem the first step is to ascertain how it is done in Central Europe, where the profit has to be divided between the collector, the middleman and the wholesale herbalist, in addition to the freight to be paid by shipping the herbs to this country. It is here that good organisation is absolutely essential, and co-operation between all the herb growing centres in this country becomes an actual necessity. Otherwise one centre will be competing against another, and even such profit as the Germans and Austrians make will be rendered impossible by British buyers, who will pit one centre against another in order to lower prices.

There must be a central bureau to which all orders and offers of prices should be referred, and through which samples could be seen or obtained, and which should be responsible for the quality and correctness of the herb supplied. Collectors or growers of small quantities of herbs should be in touch with a local centre, where these small parcels can be received and graded into the large parcels of a hundredweight or so, such as are convenient for wholesale dealers to handle. Each centre should have a collector who would go round and collect small parcels from any who send in their names to the centre or become

affiliated as members. Drying must be done at home of all herbs, leaves and flowers, as far as possible. Roots are a different matter, requiring prolonged and careful drying. Each centre should use its influence to induce some wealthy resident to set up in the neighbourhood a fruit drying installation, such as those used in the United States for drying vegetables, fruits, etc., like that supplied by the Alliance Vegetable Company, 52, New Broad Street, E.C., in which roots can be dried by the ton. Such an installation could probably be made to pay at least 5 per cent. on the money invested. Such roots as dandelion, burdock, belladonna, couch grass, Acorus Calamus, elecampane, male fern, dock, etc., could then be dried without any trouble. The collection of couch grass, dandelion and dock could be economically carried on when fields are ploughed, when the farm labourers or their children would easily remove the roots from the loosened soil, to the benefit of the land and of the labourer's pocket, and the difficulty of drying that obstructs the work of the grower of small quantities of such roots as burdock, comfrey, elecampane, angelica, or lovage, would disappear.

#### DRYING.

For methods of drying and the principles that underlie the process the reader is referred to the lecture given at the Royal Horticultural Society on April 11th, and published at 6d., and to that given at Caxton Hall, and now published by the author at 1s.

The reader who wishes to know what herbs are really wanted at the present time should consult a reprint of three articles in the *Pharmaceutical Journal*, published by the author at 1s. 5d., post free, in which lists for each month of the plants wanted by the hundredweight or ton are given. Those for the present month are here quoted :

*Herbs.*—Agrimony, wood betony, burdock leaves, centaury, eyebright, hemlock leaves, meadow-sweet, mountain flax, sanicle, yarrow, wild carrot and wood sage.

*Flowers.*—Blue cornflower, clover, elder, mallow, marigold, mullein, red poppy petals and rose.

*Roots.*—Burdock, burnet saxifrage and colchicum.

The usual mistake made in drying is in attempting to dry too much at once, especially where space is limited. Another mistake is to collect herbs when the atmosphere is damp, and a third is to leave them in a damp atmosphere when dried. The difficulty of deciding when leaves or herbs are properly dried is that the following rules are either unknown to the individual or are neglected :

First : Plants lose three-quarters or four-fifths of their weight of moisture in drying, so that 4lb. or 5lb. of fresh herb yields only 1lb. of dry.

Secondly : The thin part, or lamina, of leaves always dries more quickly than the midrib, or stalk, and herbs are not properly dried until the midrib and stem are firm and brittle.

Thirdly : After drying, unless kept in a warm and dry room, they absorb about 12 per cent. of moisture from the surrounding air, and are then liable to become mouldy.

The ordinary summer temperature, or from 70deg. to 80deg. (Fahr.), is sufficient to dry most herbs in from three to six days. Each plant has its own individual peculiarities, which must be learned by experience and observation, but this general rule applies to all, that there must be circulation of air between or around each leaf if it is to be dried properly. Hence the first stage must be to spread out leaves separately or to hang them in bunches by the stalks so that air can get between them, and not put in heaps until they are sufficiently dried for the lamina or leaf blade to not lay flat on another leaf, thus permitting air between the leaves.

There is even a larger trade done in dried sweet herbs, such as mint, parsley, thyme, sage, tarragon, savory, etc. Every household in the kingdom keeps for winter use a bottle or tin of powdered sweet herbs for flavouring soups, entrées and vegetables, and these dried sweet herbs have usually been purchased on the Continent, but there is no reason why anyone who has a garden should not propagate and dry these herbs wherever the soil suits them. All sweet herbs should be dried at as low a temperature as possible, in a current of air, and not exposed to the sun, since heat causes them to lose some of their volatile oil, on which their fragrance and flavour depends. Hence these are best dried in the apparatus used for drying fruits and vegetables on a large scale. On a small scale they can be dried on greenhouse shelves when they are empty, or hung up in a warm attic, or under a covered shed, where the temperature reaches 70deg. (Fahr.) and the air is not moist. The sweet herbs are sold either in bunches or rubbed through a sieve, so as to be freed from stalk as much as possible. For this purpose they should be rubbed as soon as thoroughly dry and before they have had time to absorb moisture from the air, and then packed in bottles or tins rendered air-tight, each tin or bottle containing a quantity of uniform weight. The rubbed herbs, of course, command a higher price than the bunched herbs.

#### MARKETING.

The chief buyers of medicinal plants in the fresh and dried state are wholesale druggists and manufacturers of medicinal preparations, lists of whom are to be found in the London

Directory and in the directories of our larger cities, and wild and cultivated herbs are chiefly purchased by the few large wholesale herbalists. The dried sweet herbs have a large market, being sold not only by wholesale herbalists, but by large grocers and provision merchants, co-operative stores, etc.

#### SUMMER PRUNING—APPLES, PEARS AND PLUMS.

A WELL known fruit grower in the Southern Counties recently remarked that if he had to choose one time of the year only for pruning his fruit trees, his choice would certainly fall on the first week in August. Doubtless there are many who would not agree with him and would prefer to leave all the pruning till midwinter; but there is much to be said in favour of summer pruning, especially in a year like this, when, owing to the lack of sun and a liberal supply of rainy days, the fruit trees in many counties have made, and are still making, a superabundance of soft, sappy growth. A moment's reflection will show that unless this dense leafage is reduced, the wood on which next year's crops should be borne will stand a poor chance of getting ripened in the sun, and every fruit grower knows that ripened wood is essential for fruit production. Now summer pruning applies to trained fruit trees in all their forms, whether grown on walls and fences or in the open as bush and pyramid trees; but with large standards it is out of the question, neither is it necessary when the heads have room for development. Where the pruning of large standard trees becomes necessary owing to the overcrowding of branches, this should certainly be taken in hand in winter, when some of the branches may be cut clean out to their base with a pruning saw, afterwards paring the cut surface off with a sharp knife and dressing the wound with white paint or tar. Obviously such drastic thinning of the growth should not be carried out when the sap is flowing, and summer pruning applies only to the growth made this year. If we examine a wall trained fruit tree at the present time, we see a great many young, sappy growths coming off at right angles to the wall. This growth is known as breast wood, and it is with this young wood that summer pruning is necessary. Some fruit growers cut away parts of the young growth with knife or secateurs, although the more thoughtful cultivator prefers to give the growths a twist and bend them over. By so doing the flow of sap is checked, but not completely, and in consequence the trees do not suffer as they might by the sudden removal of a large portion of their foliage at a time when they are in full leaf. True, the trees present a very unhappy, not to say untidy, appearance with

their twisted shoots hanging half withered from the branches, but this should be quite a secondary consideration where fruit is required. It should be distinctly understood that summer pruning applies only to lateral growths. The main or extension shoots should be pruned in winter if at all, and then only slightly so long as there is room for development. The idea that prevails in some quarters that every extension shoot must be cut back to a certain level is wrong, and invariably does a great deal of harm. It is well to point out two common mistakes in summer pruning. The first is the fault of pruning too early, with the subsequent waste of vigour in secondary growths of weak and useless character, and the second is that of pruning too hard. Speaking generally, the best time to prune is about the first week in August in the Southern Counties and about the last week of that month in the Northern Counties. Certain Apples, like Lady Sudeley, Irish Peach, Cornish Gilliflower, Domino, Lord Derby and, indeed, many others, fruit remarkably well on the tips of the branches. Such varieties when grown in the open merely require to have their weak and unfruitful growths thinned out. This mode of fruiting really applies to far more varieties of Apples than is generally supposed, and when the branches may be allowed a certain amount of extension in growth, they will be all the more fruitful in consequence. With closely trained trees this mode of fruiting is out of the question, and all attention is turned to the production of fruit spurs, to which end nothing is more helpful than summer pruning. The question naturally arises as to how far the new growth should be pinched back. With both Apples and Pears the point of pinching should be from 4in. to 6in. from the base of the shoot. With Plums on walls it may be slightly harder, and where breast wood is overcrowded the trees will be improved by cutting some of the weakest growths clean out to the base. As the result of summer pruning, new growths are often quickly pushed up from below the point of pruning, and these shoots in turn should be stopped, although this is not of vital importance since all summer-pruned growths are pruned back to within an inch or so of the base in the winter. The summer pruning of trees which do not bear fruit spurs is of an entirely different nature. Such fruits as Peaches, Nectarines and Morello Cherries fruit on the young wood that is made during the previous year. Summer pruning of these trees consists of removing weak and ill-placed growth and laying in and encouraging the better shoots. Our three chief fruits, Apples, Plums and Pears, to which may be added the Apricot, fruit mainly on spur branches, and here summer pruning as described is of the greatest importance. H. C.

## LITERATURE

#### SOME WAR BOOKS.

ONE of the cleverest and most convincing volumes issued during the war is *The Causes and Consequences of the War*, by Yves Guyot (Hutchinson). The editor in chief of the *Journal des Economistes* long ago made his reputation in this country, and he exhibits in the book before us all the merits on which his fame is built, almost more than French lucidity of style and precision of analysis. M. Guyot takes a very comprehensive view, tracing the origin of the war on one hand to a continuation of the Eismarckian policy of 1870, and on the other to the anti-British feeling arising out of various German ambitions as embodied in such watchwords as "Grasping the Trident," "Our future is on the sea," "Our place in the sun"; extending the Eastern frontier, as expressed in the phrase "The Berlin and Bagdad railway." Finally, there is the argument that a bursting German population demanded a new outlet. Many reasons can be given for any course of action, but usually one is dominant over all others, and probably in this case the ruling passion was the envy and hatred of Great Britain, fostered by the German professors and philosophers. It would take too long to comment in detail upon the several propositions laid down in the important section "The Consequences," but one deserves special heed. It is the dissolution of the German Empire; in fact, the dissolution of the two central autocracies, the German and the Austrian. Of the German colonies, M. Guyot says that if allowed to go back into German hands they can never be other than a bone of contention; hence they will be divided between Great Britain, Belgium, France and Japan. He is not at all sanguine about obtaining indemnity even from a beaten enemy. Germany will be financially exhausted before the war ends, and the idea of seizing the State railway and State mining revenue would only provide a little on account. "We must not deceive ourselves. The war will not bring material profit even to the victors. The most they can do is to reduce their loss." One great aim should be to prevent for as long as possible

any repetition of the events of 1914 and 1915. In using his authority to cultivate this modest result, M. Yves Guyot has performed a great service for the Allied countries. He says nothing to support the illusion that peace may come soon. Germany is a stubborn fighter, and it will probably take Russia another two years to lead her seven millions to Berlin, and M. Guyot looks to that as the signal for victory and peace.

Louis Raemaekers' indictment of *The Great War* (Fine Art Society) is comment of a very opposite character to that of M. Guyot. Perhaps the most difficult of all commentary to make is that of the cartoonist, and this is not easily recognised by those who do not bring their imagination to bear upon the process. Most of us on first reading of a notable event or movement are conscious only of a vague impression—a bad impression or a good impression, as the case may be. In the mind of the cartoonist there is no room for blur or indistinctness. One of the most striking features of Raemaekers' work is that it is invariably bold, prompt and decided. You feel sure that before he took brush or crayon in hand he had fully made up his mind not only on the merits of the question, but in regard to his presentation of it. In these cartoons there is never the slightest sign of doubt or hesitancy. The comment is made with lightning rapidity and directness. Mr. Perry Rolinson, who writes an introductory appreciation of the artist, points out that the book may prove to be a very valuable investment after the war, because Germans will be very glad to pay heavily for its suppression. He gives an authentic version of the anecdote which under various forms has appeared in the Press about the keenness of the Germans to arrest the Dutch cartoonist. We can well understand it, for he gets home every time. All the savagery, lust, brutality and bullying of the Teutonic nature is brought out with unsurpassable vigour. Yet we are inclined to think that the strongest work is that which portrays the Belgian towns and villages when the Huns entered. Very likely the artist himself beheld some of the scenes. At any rate, he read the record of them on the faces

of refugees. Whoever has come into personal contact with those who were subjected to German fury can realise by the impress left on them what horrors worse than Dante ever conceived of in Hell were witnessed in the later months of 1914. Raemaekers has put upon paper a vivid transcript from life of those fearful terrified crowds whose peaceful lives had contained nothing to prepare them in the slightest degree for the torture of body and mind to which they were exposed. Here are women and children, virgins and ancient crones, wailing such woes as one thought could never befall the world again. Here are soldiers acting as the Roman legions might have done when Caesar recognised that of all the Gallic races, the Belgians were the bravest. After all these centuries humanity can produce as much brutality as ever it did. It seems to us that Raemaekers' cartoons would live for ever, if only because they are in their own way a record of the most significant incidents in the war. It would not be true to describe them of equal merit. The artist has yielded to compulsion and produced too quickly. But it is too quickly only for his mind, his hand never loses its cunning, which is only a roundabout way of saying that he is a consummate draughtsman, a real maker of pictures; but he has allowed his mind to be dredged for material.

**German, Slav and Magyar**, by R. Seton-Watson. (Williams and Norgate, 2s. 6d.)

MOST of us know a good deal about two of this trio, and feel hazy about the third. Mr. Seton-Watson knows about all of them. He has been in the Balkan States himself, and perhaps could distinguish with the naked eye a Slovak from a Slovenian and a Czech from a Croat; he has written other books on the subject, and some have been translated into German and published at Berlin. He writes clearly, and it is easy to understand the main purpose of his book. Many good people believe that if the German were once ejected from Belgium and Northern France English aims in the war would be achieved; but, if they read this book and are convinced by it, they will realise that there are problems in the East as well which call for settlement quite as urgently. According to Mr. Seton-Watson there are two villains in the piece, and the Magyars are as guilty of this war as the Prussians; and no settlement can be permanent or satisfactory unless it delivers Czechs and Croats, Slovaks and Serbians from the oppression of the Magyar. Hard things are said here of our foreign policy and of ministers who have courted Bulgaria and left Serbia to her fate. This is obviously a matter of great importance, and the writer is evidently well informed and able.

**Boy of My Heart**. (Hodder and Stoughton, 2s. 6d.)

IN a foreword the publishers of this anonymous book vouch for its truth in small things as in great, "a record . . . of the short years of a boy who willingly and even joyously gave up his life . . . for the sake of his country." Warning enough is here that tragedy is the burden of this book, but those whom neither this nor the title prevent from reading it will find much humour, many of the prettinesses of life, the outpourings of a mother's passionate love forming at once the relief and the intensification of that tragedy. The mother who writes the book is apparently a literary woman of some standing—her friends will probably find it easy to identify her—and she writes with frankness and freshness, with many wise remarks and some less happy, such as the assertion that she herself is "too deeply a lover of music ever willingly to go to a concert"—a dangerous line of reasoning for any artist to adopt—revealing herself as a charming personality, though, perhaps, too superstitious and now and then tintured with that contemptuousness which is the vulgarity of the refined. Her love and her loss are real, and the book, a cry of human love and sorrow, stands beyond criticism, beyond all tribute but that of tears. The book begins when on December 25th, 1915, this mother is waiting for the return of her soldier son on his second leave. He is late, very late, and while she waits she goes over in her own mind the days of his childhood, recalls his triumphs at school, his courage, his beauty, his charm, his love for her, even his faults and his punishments, though to one glaring act of disobedience—his days in Petrograd at the time of a cholera scare—she seems to have been blind. His name is Roland; as a baby he called himself Yeogh Wough, and it became his name for her too, so that he wrote to her as "Dearest Big Yeogh Wough" and signed himself "Little Yeogh Wough" when he was taller than she, a big, young officer in the fighting line in France. The story of his short life, the many, many nights when she knelt at his bed and taught him manliness, patriotism and tenderness, his dawning love is told in some two hundred pages; on the last we learn that Little Yeogh Wough is not late, there is to be no waiting for him any more. The dread of losing this beloved child seems to have darkened even his mother's happiest hours, for he was one of

those brilliant and most lovable people whose death we cannot help but forebode, knowing how blank the world would seem without them. It is at once a pain and a relief to us when the shadow of death which has loomed all through the book falls at its close. Despite its human and pathetic power, it is not possible to wish the book a large circulation, fear and grief for so many of us have made it a subject too painful, and it is but slight comfort to those who are suffering to remember that Little Yeogh Wough's mother and such as she have not known the worst of grief, since they have been parted from their children by "a death so noble."

**Spectators**, by Clara Smith and T. Bosanquet. (Constable, 6s.)

IF a book is to be judged by its capacity to confer pleasure, this book is entitled to a high place in the year's literary catalogue. The story is indeed of the slightest, but the story does not matter at all. In the manner of its telling lies the charm. There are people who dislike or deride the epistolary form; but here is the epistolary form almost at its best. These letters are really letters, not literary productions smelling of the lamp. Their writers—a middle-aged brother and sister, delightfully in sympathy—are as real as they are attractive, sharing as they do an unjaundiced outlook upon the world and a fine high faculty of appreciation which never loses its way among invertebrate enthusiasms. These well disciplined spectators of life, who use their intelligence "to discover all the hints and promises of beauty that most minds neglect for the examination of lapses and failures," are excellent company for anyone who cares for books and fresh air and the fair places of the earth and all the fascinating, baffling problems of human relationship. Here are common-sense, humour, a cleverness which is cleverly unobtrusive, criticism untainted by bitterness, and a gentle satire free from the flaws of malice. If, occasionally, a faint, very faint, note of conscious superiority makes itself heard, it is easily forgiven on the plea that it is perhaps not unjustified. A high degree of discernment, companioned by a happy gift of expression, is not the commonest of human endowments. One of Mrs.

John Wychwood's charming pen-pictures from Italy must suffice to indicate the quality of the writing: "Our village is Borgo alla Collina, a narrow little street of pale-coloured old houses ending in a mysterious archway under the palace. That is how Italian villages should end, with a picture of hills that are always blue framed in the darkness of the arch. They should also be set on private hills of their own, as we are. It doesn't break the charm that the original idea was to watch one's enemies rather than the mortal beauty of the earth, though I can hardly believe that they weren't consciously making the best of both worlds when they built their piazza here."

**The Anzac Book**. (Cassell, 2s. 6d. net.)

**Crusading in Anzac, A.D. 1915**, pictured and described by Signaller Ellis Silas. (London: *The British Australasian*, 115, High Holborn, W.C.)

**On the Anzac Trail**, by "Anzac." (Heinemann, 3s. 6d. net.)



THE LATE MAJOR WILLIAM LA TOUCHE CONGREVE, D.S.O.

*Who wrote many interesting letters to "Country Life."*

entitled "The Silver Lining: A View of Sunset over Imbros as seen from Anzac," is a truly admirable piece of work. Some of the humorous comic drawings, too, are very good, and the artist staff are to be congratulated on the outcome of their labours. *Crusading in Anzac, A.D. 1915*, also calls for mention from the same point of view. The artist-author was one who served with the Australian Imperial Forces at the Dardanelles, and, in a note preceding the book, he says that he has endeavoured to portray War, not from the point of view of big historical facts, but as the ordinary soldier sees it, shorn of all its pomp and circumstance. It must be admitted that this endeavour has been largely achieved. Their character may be gathered from the following comment by the artist himself: "It is not with any desire for morbid sensationalism that I introduce the dead in every drawing. They were part of our daily life; they were part of the character of the peninsula—at least of Anzac." These sketches, though rough, are full of individuality, and invariably convey a sense of atmosphere as well as of life and movement. *On the Anzac Trail* consists of extracts from the diary of a New Zealand sapper. This book, which is without illustrations, is written in a very free-and-easy style—the descriptions of "Anzac's" experiences are vivid on the whole, especially after the Dardanelles are reached. The author happened to be in England when war broke out, and joined up with about two hundred other New Zealanders. He had been at the Dardanelles for several months when he "got in the way of some bullets" and had to be carried off the field. After being in six hospitals he was discharged as permanently unfit, but his final verdict on his chequered experience of warfare is that he "wouldn't have missed it, good or bad, for worlds." In those words we have the true sporting spirit, which makes the book worth reading.

## THE SHIRE ON ITS TRIAL

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR.—I am much interested in "Surrey Farmer's" letter on the above subject, and venture to ask you to allow me to support him in many of his contentions. As a farmer and a landowner I had, for some time before the outbreak of war, been very dubious in my mind as to the economic value of the modern Shire as the horse power on the ordinary farm. He eats too much, works too slowly and is too susceptible to every known ill by which horses can be afflicted. Nine farmers out of ten go on breeding the Shire because they see the tenth man, who happens to have a good brood mare, every now and again make £70 of a sizeable four year old gelding. I am inclined to think that the loss incurred by all the numberless Shires working on the land far outweighs the profit made over the comparatively few sold for remunerative prices to go and work in towns, and to perform the only work to which the modern Shire is really suitable for, i.e., shifting very heavy loads in confined spaces, or for short journeys. I am also inclined to think that breeders of Shires have been educated by the show system to look no deeper than the skin. In the endeavour to obtain size (which, unfortunately, denotes height as well as weight) and beauty of contour they have quite forgotten that to tackle work courage and toughness, both of body and mind, are essential. Hence, in their endeavours to improve this fine breed, they are, to my mind, rapidly ruining it. Instead of a working horse they are giving us an over-tall, shallow-middled, soft-fleshed exotic, with legs covered in useless hair. Very lovely, no doubt, in the show horse, but in the working horse only a detriment as it harbours dirt and hides injuries. And apparently hair on legs and grease seem to go together. I wonder how many thousands of pounds are lost in a year through hairy-legged horses having itchy legs. You cannot sell them for their proper value, they cannot rest at night, and by incessant stamping they wear out their joints, their shoes and the stable floor.

Since the outbreak of the war I happen to have been in a position to take particular note of the horses used for Army purposes; and as it is a subject in which I take great interest, I have often questioned officers who have to use the various kinds of horses as to their suitability in war. Only those who are using the Shire horse at almost the same work for which it was used before the war, and who have under them men who were used to Shire horses in civilian life, say a good word for him. Not even these men like the big modern Shire or Clyde. They all, without exception, prefer the short-legged cart-horse of Wales and Devon. The majority of officers hate the sight of them, and as for the Veterinary Corps, well—in consequence of the trouble the heavy horses give the members of this most admirably organised Corps, they are becoming so proficient in the expressiveness of their language as to cause considerable anxiety both to the fish porters at Billingsgate and to the barges on the Thames!

This terrible war will teach us many lessons if we will only open our eyes to realities, rid ourselves of our insular prejudices and refuse to be dominated by pre-war ideas and vested interests. I wish the efforts of the Shire Horse Society every success, and I only trust its Council will take warning from the *débâcle* which has overwhelmed the Hackney, only because that formerly very useful breed has been ruined by the craze for exaggerated, almost acrobatic, action produced by the show ring. What are the lessons the war has taught us about the Shire? In other words, in what ways have we found him a good servant to the State in her hour of need, and in what ways a bad one? First in his favour: His weight and shape enable two of his kind to pull the same wagon as four light draught horses would pull. Hence man power is halved, and the length of your column is reduced, a pair of horses taking up less room on the road than a team of four. That, I fear, is the sum total of his advantages.

Now for evidence against him: (a) Any mental anxiety, such as that caused by railway or other travelling, change of environment, being unduly hustled, etc., tends to cause a greater rise of temperature in the Shire than in any other breed. It does to some extent in all. (b) They have a very low resisting power to all pulmonary diseases. Obviously (a) has a direct bearing on (b), as a horse with a high temperature caused by excitement would be much more susceptible to an attack of pneumonia than one with a normal temperature, and they are especially apt to meet the germ when travelling. (c) They are the worst of patients, putting up no sort of fight. (d) They do not withstand exposure, and easily lose condition. (e) They absolutely need bulky food, a very difficult thing to provide on active service. (f) They will not stand hustling on the march. This failing would have been very serious if the armies had marched and counter-marched instead of being sedentary for so many months. (g) They are subject to grease and itchy legs; almost unknown in other breeds. (h) Very apt to develop sidebones. (i) Lack of courage in deep ground. (j) Slowness of pace. And now I come to another point and a very important one, becoming more and more important every day. What sort of foundation is the Shire, or the Clyde, for the production of artillery horses when you cross him, or her, with animals of a lighter breed? After buying several thousand horses for the Army in Canada and the United States, and after seeing many thousands at work in England and in France, I have no hesitation in saying that there is no worse cross from which to get the artillery horse than the Shire or the Clyde. The half-breds are shallow bodied, soft legged, big footed, and when asked to trot on, go all unbalanced, pounding along with all their weight on their forehand; hence certain to tire themselves easily, and also tire the unfortunate men who have to ride them.

There is a belief in this country, purely from ignorance and from thinking that nobody else knows anything about horses except ourselves, that the French breeds of draught horses are soft. That is a prejudice which has vanished from the minds of all those who have carefully and with unbiased minds watched the Percherons and the half-bred Percherons, which now almost entirely horse our artillery, at work in our Army. Nothing could answer better except perhaps the old Irish draught horse. But where is he nowadays? Ask the clever men who introduced the Clyde and the

Hackney into Ireland. They, the political agitator, and the Sinn Feiner have all done about equal harm to Ireland. I wonder if it was money or mistaken patriotism made them each act so.

Until the war I knew nothing about the Percheron, and I do not know enough yet on such short acquaintance to make any definite assertion. But so far everything I have seen of him and his work tends to make me think that he is the economic horse on the tenant farmer's farm, for he is quick, hardy, courageous, docile and plenty big enough; also that he is a great asset to any country in war time. Pure bred, he is the ideal horse for heavy guns. Crossed with a lighter breed he produces an artillery, or light draught, horse only rivalled by the almost extinct Irish draught and Welsh cart-horses. He has clean legs, and out of very many thousands I have never seen a case of grease and have only met one veterinary surgeon who had. He is not as shapely as English horses, but probably careful selection would improve that. All the foregoing remarks, both for and against the Shire horse, apply almost equally to the modern Clydesdale.

If the Shire Horse and Clydesdale Societies want to do real good and not merely go for show points, let them discourage the tall horse, i.e., anything over 16h. 2in., and also the superfluous hair. Let them institute tests of courage and endurance for the stallions; the short-legged, deep-ribbed horse with well balanced action will soon come to his own then. And let our Board of Agriculture seriously consider the introduction of the best class of Percheron, putting them preferably into the districts which have hills and small enclosures and therefore where the farmer will most appreciate them.—B. A. LANCE.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR.—I am at a loss to follow the letter from "Surrey Farmer." The impression of a great many is that the up-to-date Shire is the most enduring and the greatest worker of to-day, and is certainly not a domestic animal ruined by the show yard. One has only to go to Liverpool, Manchester, Glasgow and other large towns to see the Shire at his best, where he is still "top dog" and has been for a great number of years, and is likely to continue so. If "Surrey Farmer" will study the fault he so much objects to, viz., forging, he will only find it in the young, growing animals. This in certain cases has always been so, but is seldom heard in animals fully matured. The exaggerated shoeing of the present day for the show yard is, to my mind, regrettable, and no doubt adds to forging in the young animals. This is the first occasion on which I have heard the Shire spoken of disparagingly in connection with this terrible war, and I can only refer "Surrey Farmer" to my article in the *Live Stock Journal Almanac*, which I understand still holds good. Personally, my brother and I work nothing but Shire mares, and have no desire to alter them in any way: no day is too long for them. I would also refer to the particulars given of the entries in the Shire Horse Society's Stud Book, where it will be found that a great number of the best are the produce of tenant farmers' mares. No, Sir, the show ring is not detrimental to the breed. The balance sheet of the Shire Horse Society, I believe the richest of its kind in the world, proves this up to the hilt. My opinion is that the wealthy man at home in the past (and I hope will be in the future) has been the means of keeping all our best Shires at home, and we, as breeders, have no fear of losing our export trade while this is the case and we can keep breeding Shires that can walk five miles an hour with at least a ton behind them, and in the big cities they have very much heavier loads.—A. JOHN FLOWERS.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR.—I think the question raised by "Surrey Farmer" is at the present moment a very pertinent one. The fault of forging (one of many) which he mentions is born of two things—want of "vim" and energy, and heavy shoes. Why the latter are ever tolerated in the show ring, on either Shire or Hackney, is beyond my comprehension. They have done much to ruin the former by educating the public to admire a false and useless, nay, more, harmful form of action. But to return to the Shire. It will be admitted after the war on all hands, if not lips, that the big Shire has been a dismal failure at the front, and the fact that no more are being purchased, but large orders are being sent to Canada and the States for active, smaller horses, speaks for itself. What man of experience, having a large quantity of heavy material to transport over long distances and bad roads, would think of buying Shires for the job? I have said before, and repeat, that as a working proposition the modern Shire is the greatest fraud we have. The amount of work he will do in return for what he eats and costs will compare very unfavourably with any kind of horse or pony that can put his head through a collar. If it is necessary to move very heavy loads for very short distances, and not too often, a Shire will do it and make a brave show, but you must not expect any long sustained effort from him. Is it to be wondered at, seeing that for generations his forbears in many cases have never done an honest day's work in their lives? One has heard it said of small communities, by cynics, that they make a living by taking in each other's washing. I believe that the present exalted position of the Shire is due in a large measure to a similar state of things, viz., the loyal way in which Shire breeders have always backed each other up, by attending sales and buying from each other's studs. As a result, if Richard, Thomas, or Henry has it in his mind to buy a Shire or two and goes to a noted breeder's sale, he finds the other breeders, for the most part very wealthy men, bidding against him, and he has to pull out or go without. I know of no other class of stock sale in which this system so prevails. Though I have kept a good many horses of all kinds all my life, I have not had many Shires. Some few years ago I bought for £100 three mares four and five years old, that had cost well over £200 each about twelve months before, at a well known breeder's sale. I thought I had got a bargain, but they proved to be anything but that. I have a daughter of

one of them now, six years old ; she would make £80 in a fair. I have a little Welsh cart mare about 15h. hin., which cost £35 at the same age, that would kill her at any job except truck shunting, and live at about half the cost. I have seen the Shire mare lay down when mowing, before the other had turned a hair. I do not argue from my own limited experience. I have been told by numerous officers, chiefly gunners, how difficult it was to keep them in work and condition at the front. A brigadier-general who was

staying here a short time ago was very strong on the point, a knowledgeable man, too, who has discussed the question with me on many occasions. One more word : Can any sane man believe that the feather which has been so religiously cultivated in the Shire can be for the benefit of the horse or his owner ? The Americans, who are a practical people, will have none of it. To say that you cannot grow bone without feather is nonsense.—A. M. PILLNER.

## CORRESPONDENCE

### "RECLAIMING A NORFOLK HEATH."

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I cannot allow to pass without protest your further article under the above heading. I read with grave regret your previous article on the same subject, and I hoped that, perhaps, was all you intended to publish on the matter, or I would have written then. But, seeing that you intend to continue the series and realising that this attempt to deprive East Anglia of one of its principal charms has evidently won your approval (and I know what weight is attached to the opinion of your valuable paper on all such matters), I feel that it is time to urge that there is another, and a very important point of view, with regard to the, so-called, reclamation of Norfolk heaths. I regret I have not time to go into the question very deeply, but I would say this : 1. We all know that when virgin soil is at first cultivated it will yield good crops, so that no very great store need be set by the excellent results so far obtained by Dr. Edwards. 2. The reclamation of these beautiful wild heaths has been attempted over and over again (notably towards the end of the eighteenth century), with the inevitable result that whenever prices fell, hundreds, and indeed thousands, of acres which had paid their way when prices were up went out of cultivation again. Such derelict land becomes mere waste, and if eventually the bracken spreads over it, one can only be thankful that *Nature* has "reclaimed" it. 3. Finally, I should like to ask whether the advantage accruing to the nation by the *temporary* cultivation of these few thousand acres of poor land is not far more than outweighed by the irreparable loss which the *permanent* destruction of these beautiful heaths would be to the country. I feel convinced that all naturalists, sportsmen, artists and every other lover of beautiful Nature will join in an emphatic "yes." With regard to its being only a *temporary* reclamation, I use the word advisedly, as I feel convinced that when once more a low price for produce is added to a high one for labour, the first land to be given up will be these dry, sandy tracts of Norfolk.—FREDERICK DULEEP SINGH.

[Our correspondent in the plenitude of other interests does not seem to have followed attentively the European movement towards permanent scientific reclamation. His letter is dealt with in our "Country Notes."—ED.]

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In "Reclaiming a Norfolk Heath," in your issue of July 22nd, the returns of green peas and dry peas are discussed. The most important argument against green peas seems to be that the vines are easily broken by pulling the pod, and so damage results to the still growing crop. If peas were gathered by using shears where they are grown for the market, no damage would be done, and this process is quicker than the ordinary hand pulling.—H. V.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have read with the greatest interest the articles on heath reclamation in this neighbourhood published in two of your recent issues. Dr. Edwards' experiments are being carried out on the same kind of land as is found on this estate, and if they really prove that a profit of £3 can be obtained from land of this description no one would be better pleased than the writer. It would be very interesting to know the details of the figures quoted in last week's article, both as to costs and sales, and particularly as to what prices were obtained for wheat, peas and oats. Before the war these crops fetched about 32s., 64s. and 17s. respectively. Prices now are 54s., 170s. and 35s., and are obviously exceptional. It would also be interesting to know what the yield per acre has been in each case, and especially what system of cropping Dr. Edwards intends to pursue. The whole system of light land farming in these parts is founded on the close-folding of sheep on the farm. This takes the place of manuring with farmyard manure, which in the case of light land such as we are dealing with would require enormous quantities of manure to give satisfactory results. Sheep folding is by far the most economical method. At the present time potash is nearly unobtainable, and will remain so until after the war.

It is well known that "rotten flag," as it is called in this county, will produce good crops for at any rate two seasons, and it is particularly to be remarked that the present summer has been very wet, which is very much in favour of light land. It is not surprising that the crops look well at Methwold at present. A dry summer here is disastrous. The practice of thin sowing referred to is one that is well known to experienced farmers, the advantages having been proved over and over again. The method of using wire netting adopted by Dr. Edwards is the correct one ; but it has been found to be a good plan to bury the netting, as well as turn it over outwards, and also to run a single strand of wire about 3in. above the top of the netting (as done in Australia) to prevent the rabbits climbing over, which is by no means so rare an occurrence as might be imagined. Many experienced potato growers would express surprise at potatoes being one of the crops chosen on so light a soil, while in a game country such as this Harrison's Glory pea is too tempting to game to risk growing it. The writer knows of an instance where this species of pea was grown in the same field with Dun peas, with the result that the game picked out the Harrison's Glory and left the other. Dr. Edwards would, I am told, be well advised to harvest and dry them for sale in the winter instead of selling them in the pod. Finally, is it not a

debateable point as to whether such land as this is not better suited to timber growing ? These remarks, if somewhat sceptical in spirit, are not meant to suggest that such public-spirited work as is being carried out by Dr. Edwards at Methwold is not valuable, and likely to add to our knowledge and progress.—H. C. B. U., Buckenham Hall, Mundford, Norfolk.

[We cordially welcome expert and sympathetic criticism of this kind. It arrived just as we are going to press, but we hope to publish a reply by Dr. Edwards in next week's issue.—ED.]

### "A WAR OF TIMBER."

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In your interesting article "A War of Timber" attention is drawn to the pressing demands of the moment for soft woods, and "those who are meditating planting on any considerable scale" are urged to seek "quick returns" by planting soft woods to the neglect of hard woods. I fear that you are encouraging a course of action already only too likely to prevail, to the lasting detriment of British forestry. Even in pre-war days I heard experienced wood merchants deplore the scanty planting of hard woods. By all means let conifers be planted in abundance in suitable localities, but by no means let us abandon the planting of the many valuable kinds of hard woods wherever conditions are favourable. We shall leave an evil legacy to succeeding generations if by being greedy for quick returns we force our successors to rely solely on foreign importations for supplies of ash, plane, oak, etc. Planters, at any rate, are bound to extend their vision far beyond present war requirements, and must look to supplying implements for the arts and industries of an era of peace during (let us hope) the next hundred years. The wisest economy would seem to be to plant different soils and situations with the most suitable trees, and thus ensure the highest ultimate profits which will accrue to the best grown timber in the general market.—HUGH SHAW STEWART.

[Theoretically our correspondent is right, but practically encourage planting and the results aimed at by Sir Hugh Shaw Stewart will follow.—ED.]

### TREES AND THE LAND.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In an interesting article on "Trees and the Land" Captain Edwards makes some remarks on the bread in common use, which, though probably not intended to be taken literally, must have been received by some of your readers with a certain amount of surprise. The statement made is that "in modern bakers' bread, thanks to the careful grinding of the present day, which is all to the advantage of the corn merchant and none to the consumer, nourishment is practically absent . . . and many (especially the poor) prefer the white flour to the brown, although they know there is little nourishment in the former." I suggest that it is reasonable to suppose that a labourer on 13s. a week and "nothing found" was forced to make good use of his knowledge as to the bread best able to support himself and his family. The result of this experience in favour of white bread would seem to be confirmed by the published experiments undertaken at Cambridge and elsewhere. A brown loaf may show to the chemist a small increase in the quantity of food over that in white bread, but in the former case the amount capable of being taken up by the body is less than in the latter. In addition the brown loaf appears to contain such an extra amount of water as quite to do away with the idea that it can contain more actual food than the white loaf. It is a curious illustration of the state of opinion that while the writer was told by a modern steel roll miller that he preferred to eat brown bread, a modern town baker said that he had stopped supplying Standard bread in any quantity because it did not agree with his customers' digestion, and a modern housewife said that she liked brown bread for a change, but was quite firm that she did not want it for every day. On some of us the feeling of sympathy set up by the picturesque surroundings of the old stone grinding mills and the glamour of the past may possibly have a certain influence in our choice, but your correspondent has obviously substantial reasons which could not fail to be of interest at a time when wheat is higher than it has been for just on fifty years.—HUGH DE HAVILLAND.

### BLACK MARKINGS ON GOLDFISH.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In answer to "M.D." I may say that goldfish are an extremely variable species with regard to coloration ; white (albinistic) and black (melanic) specimens (wholly or partially) are not uncommon. The present writer had one which was black all over with the exception of a red ring round the edge of the orbit of each eye. No satisfactory explanation can be given for the undue development, or otherwise, of colouring matter, which occurs throughout animated nature—wild and domesticated.—ALBERT WADE.

### [TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Referring to the observations of your correspondent "M.D." on this subject in COUNTRY LIFE of July 15th, I have had two gold fish for fifteen years. When I first got them they were quite small, and by May last (1916) one had grown to a length of about 7in., being a brilliant gold colour all over, the other to a length of 6in. being gold turning to white, the white being, I think, a sign of advancing age. These fish have lived in a large glass bowl with a layer of pebbles at the bottom and floating weed

(*Anacharis canadensis*) growing in the water. About the time mentioned I returned some of this, which I had previously taken from the bowl and kept in a separate vessel, again to the fish-bowl, and shortly after I noticed that black markings were developing round the snout of the larger fish, and also that it was constantly sucking air at the surface to the neglect of its usual ration of ant-eggs. One morning in the early days of May I found this fish floating on the water dead, the black markings on its nose being very pronounced. I also noticed that the dorsal fin of the other fish showed a black streak, where in swimming at the surface it might project above the water. I at once turned out all the weed, thoroughly cleansed everything, and very shortly the black on the fin of the remaining fish disappeared, and it and a small carp, which I had added to the bowl during the winter, have since been perfectly healthy and normal in their behaviour. It would appear that the weed had gone wrong in some way and that the parts of the fishes which came in contact with the air became blackened. It would be interesting to know if, from their position, the markings on your correspondent's fish could be attributable to the same cause. In any case they seem to be a danger signal, which to my regret I did not appreciate earlier.—W. S. L.

**"AN ENGLISH RIDDLE FROM FRANCE."**

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—May not this be the solution of "An English Riddle from France" given in the July 22nd issue of COUNTRY LIFE?

"There's *nothing* men love more than life,  
Hate more than death or mortal strife,  
*Nothing* there is contented men desire,  
*Nothing* the poor possess, *nothing* the rich require,  
*Nothing* the miser spends, *nothing* the spendthrift saves—  
And all men *nothing* carry to their graves."

—G. COWARD.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—

"Nothing the miser spends,—the spendthrift saves;  
And sure men carry *nothing* to their graves;  
Nothing the poor possess—the rich require;  
Complete content leaves *nothing* to desire.  
Nothing there is men hate like deadly strife,  
And surely *nothing* they love more than life."

Here is the answer; but I do not agree to the sentiment of the last line.—  
WILLIAM DOUBLEDAY.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I have just seen the question as to the answer to an old riddle in your issue of last week. I have never heard it before, but it seems fairly obvious that the answer is the word "nothing."

"What is it that men love more than life?  
Hate more than death or mortal strife?  
That which contented men desire,  
The poor possess, the rich require,  
The miser spends, the spendthrift saves—  
And all men carry to their graves?" — Nothing.

—S. S. H.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—If M. Duclaux will forgive the remark, this is a very ancient riddle. The answer is, of course, "nothing." As printed in COUNTRY LIFE there is a slight error; "that" in line 1 should be omitted.—F. S. W.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—May I suggest by way of answer: "Much ado about *nothing*?" — E. M. C.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Briefly, I have "nothing" to say in answer to the "Riddle from France." — W. I. T.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The answer to the pretty English riddle is probably "nothing," although the truth of it may be questioned in most of the instances given.—G. R.

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—In answer to M. Duclaux's query in your issue of July 22nd, the answer to the riddle is "Nothing." I do not know the origin of the riddle, but my father, who if he was alive would be 107 years old, used to ask it.—W. J.

[Answers have been received from T. Colin Argument, N. Gardner, A. W. Mace, Mary Adams, Brenda E. Spender, G. A. Fryer, B. W. Stott, Jane Carr-Lloyd, Corporal Jack I. Webster, E. Coverton, E. Glennie, Laura Meredith, Nathaniel Lloyd, Madeline Jones, E. M. Evans, Arthur B. Chamberlain, Mrs. Colville, A. F. Glazebrook, Mrs. Macneur, Mrs. H. Smith, E. Amos, Miss Garrett, Isabel Phillips, M. H. Sutton, Beatrice Pretyman, Lucy Baldwin, Archibald Sparke, "J. B. W.," "M. C.," "Despencer," "O. P.," "N. F." and others.—Ed.]

**A SOUTH AFRICAN POULTRY THIEF.**

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I enclose a snapshot of a wild cat and her kitten. They are perched up in the centre of the photograph after the cat had been caught in a trap and the kitten shot. They are photographed with the remainder of their one night's "kill," which consisted of eleven turkey chicks, ten Leghorn chicks, two ostrich chicks and a hare. On the veldt round our farm there are beautiful wild gardenias which bloom in January and have the same strong but pleasant perfume as the garden ones. Can any of your readers tell me if they are the



THE CATS AND THEIR KILL.

original stock from which our double garden gardenia came?—I. MAYO Sunnyside, P.O. Thornhill Station, Near Port Elizabeth, South Africa.

**A SEVEN YEAR OLD MILKER.**

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—As the difficulty of getting milkers throughout England is very great I send enclosed photograph of my young daughter, in case you care to publish it in COUNTRY LIFE. The child is seven and a half years old and learnt to milk well in ten days, and can milk a cow in less than fifteen minutes. I had her taught as an experiment, and also hoping her example would



MILKED IN LESS THAN FIFTEEN MINUTES.

encourage the village women.—F. H. HALL, The Manor, Great Rollright, Chipping Norton.

**THE SAND ARTIST.**

[TO THE EDITOR OF "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—What is the source of the impulse that makes everyone draw—or try to—when they find a smooth stretch of sand? The gentleman in the picture enclosed had done so much of it that he had evolved into a professional sand artist. Perhaps some of your readers may recognise the castle in Ireland whose name has escaped the camera.—D. S.



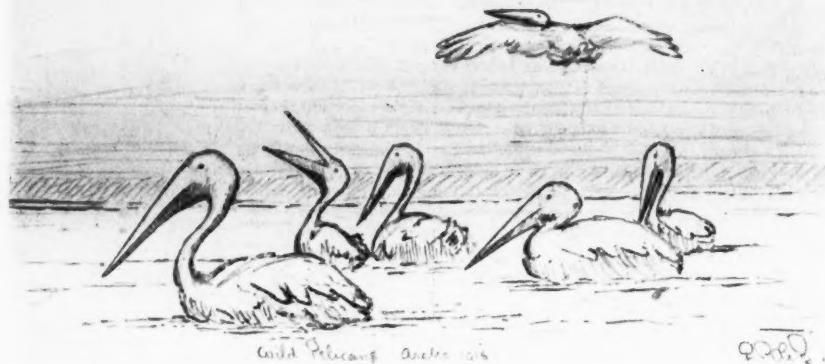
LABOUR SOON LOST.

[July 29th, 1916.]

## THE PELICAN IN THE WILDERNESS.

[To the Editor of "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—During the monsoon great flocks of pelicans collect on the shallow saltponds which are a feature of this part of the Arabian coast. A flock of pelicans, something like a hundred strong, behaving like a contingent of farmyard ducks on a village pond is a curious sight with a certain quality of nightmare about it. Nothing could be more ungainly than a pelican in the act of rising off the water; the wings cannot complete their full sweep, and the bird supplements their action by striking the surface of the water with its enormous yellow feet, producing a most comical effect. Once fairly launched the flight is not ungraceful, though the birds preposterous bill gives it an odd prehistoric effect, much like the pictures our popular scientists give us of the pterodactyl of the primæ. The pouch is hardly visible except when the birds lift their heads and clatter their mandibles, a curious habit to which they are addicted. It would be interesting to know if the pouch increases in size during the breeding season. I enclose a small sketch of a corner of a large flock I saw yesterday, but I doubt if it is suitable for reproduction.—E. P. A. LE BRETON, 5th (Field) Company, 1st K.G.O. Sappers and Miners, Indian Expeditionary Force, Aden.



bees arranged a makeshift hive, which he had fixed on the shop blind outside the tobacconist's establishment where the bees had swarmed. He picked out the queen and placed her in the makeshift hive, where she was at once followed by her subjects. Where the bees came from or how they got into the town is a mystery.—G. WELBURN.

## PET CHAMELEONS.

[To the Editor of "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—I am sending herewith a photograph of a tame chameleon, one of two that I kept for some months. They were kept in a large glass fern case, and were fed on flies. They always lived on the branches of the plants



IS THAT A FLY I SEE BEHIND ME?

in the case, and if placed on the bottom, immediately climbed up among the leaves again. They hung on to their slender perches with feet and tail so tightly that a fall was impossible. They did not need drinking water, as they were often seen licking the moisture off the leaves. Their colour was very changeable, and they would assume tints of yellow, green, black and brown; while sometimes they would inflate their bodies and at others appear quite thin. But perhaps their eyes were the most extraordinary part of them, for they could move independently, so that the creatures could see behind and in front at the same time, a plan which was useful both for avoiding danger and obtaining food. They captured their flies by means of their very long tongues, sticky at the tip, which darted out and in again like lightning. Unfortunately, the damp, chilly autumn proved fatal to them. Very few chameleons can withstand our cold. Even under the special conditions of the Reptile House at the Zoo I was told that they rarely survived the winter, their natural home being North Africa and other tropical countries.—H. A. KING.

## DIANA AT YORK.

[To the Editor of "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—With reference to "C. G.'s" letter and the photograph of the statue of Diana in your issue of June 17th, I should like to mention that there is a replica of the same in the forecourt of Heslington Hall, York, a good photograph of which appeared among those taken of Heslington Hall in your issue of July 19th, 1913.—LILLA DE YARBURGH-BATESON.

## A QUEER SWARMING PLACE.

[To the Editor of "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—The other day early in the afternoon a huge swarm of bees made their appearance in Beresford Street, St. Helier, Jersey. Fortunately, a gentleman who understood

## ENTERTAINING WOUNDED SOLDIERS.

[To the Editor of "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—We are getting up an outdoor entertainment for wounded soldiers from several V.A.D. Hospitals in the neighbourhood and it would be a great help if any of your correspondents with experience of such festivities would suggest suitable competitions and games for the men and also for visitors.—E. A. JONES.

## SPANISH SHEEP.

[To the Editor of "COUNTRY LIFE."]

SIR,—Herewith enclosed are two photographs of piebald Spanish sheep kept in Warwickshire. The ram has four horns, which is a very useful thing. The other photograph is of a ewe and two lambs.—H. G. BATCHELOR.



A PIEBALD SPANISH RAM



A EWE WITH HER LAMBS.